

# MUSLIM POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ATTITUDE IN NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19th CENTURY



*Being*

**Dissertation submitted in lieu of Papers I & II  
M.A. Final Examination in Political Science 1965**

*Under the Supervision of*

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## P R E F A C E

The first half of the 19th century constitutes a period of great significance in the history of Muslim political thought and institutions in India. It saw the final extinction of the Mughal Empire on the one hand and the emergence of British power as the supplanter of Muslim rule on the other. This situation was a challenge to Muslim political attitude as it had developed during the preceding centuries. The present dissertation is an humble attempt at analysing the basic categories of Muslim political thought and reactions during this period of great political stress and strain.

I have made as critical and extensive a use of the literature available on the subject in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English as the limited time at my disposal permitted. A detailed bibliography of the works on which this study is based is given in Appendix B.

It is my pleasant duty to express my deep sense of gratitude to Professor S.A.H. Haqqi, Head of the Department of Political Science, under whose inspiring guidance this dissertation has been prepared.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

The early decades of the 19th century constitute a water-shed in the history of Indo-Muslim political thought. The decline of Muslim political power which had begun in the early 18th century reached its lowest point during this period and the tentacles of British imperialism spread far and wide into the country. The Red Fort which had once been the Versailles of India was reduced to such a <sup>condition that according to</sup> Bishop Heber who visited it in the early 19th century, "The Shah-Buri was dirty, lonely, and wretched; the bath and fountain dry; the inlaid pavement hid with bumper and gardener's sweeping, and the walls stained with the dung of birds and bats."<sup>1</sup>

The entire political structure of northern India crumbled during this period. The Mughal emperors became not only pensioners but prisoners in the hands of the East India Company which soon passed from dividends to dominion, with a real government, pursuing an ambitious policy of annexation. Finding a trading company turning into the controller of Indian's destinies, Shah Abdul Aziz, son of the famous Muslim scholar and divine of Delhi, Shah Wali Ullah, declared that India had become Dar ul Harb. It was a political verdict

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1. Narrative of Journey through the Upper Provinces of India, Vol. I, pp. 306-307.

couched in religious terminology. It became the focal point of Muslim political thought in the decades that followed and, in fact, Muslim activity in the political sphere drew inspiration from this fatwa and centred round it. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and Maulana Ismail Shahid really tried to translate into practice the decision of Shah Abdul Aziz. They travelled throughout northern India, from Balakot to Calcutta and recruited supporters almost in every important town and city that they happened to visit. Hunter says that as the result of their propaganda there appeared secret organizations throughout the whole of northern India. The tragedy of Balakot (1831) was a turning point in the history of Muslim political thought and activity. It brought to light a hard fact that without efficient military organization it was utterly impossible to achieve anything and that mere religious zeal could lead nowhere. However, the zeal that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and his other colleagues had inspired amongst the people continued to agitate the religious-political thought of the Muslims. According to Sir Sayyid volunteers used to visit Balakot for at least two decades after the tragedy just to show their profound admiration for and attachment to the fallen leader. Some of them began to believe credulously that the leader had simply concealed<sup>1</sup> himself to reappear at the opportune movement. This superstitious aspect apart, it is a fact that the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid did not die with him. It continued to express itself in different

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1. Asar us Sanadid (1st edition) pp. 43 - 47.

forms at different places. Suppressed in the north-western frontier region, it made its appearance in the eastern provinces in the shape of the Faraizi movement. For many years the British merchants of Bengal found themselves in a very difficult position due to the activities of the Faraizis.

The so-called mutiny of 1857 was, in fact, preceded by several attempts to dislodge the British from the position they had slowly but surely gained in the economic and political life of the country. In the succeeding chapters an attempt is made to trace the genesis, nature of activity and impact of these movements. But before taking up a discussion of these movements and their ideological significance it seems necessary to have a glance at the political map of India in the beginning of the 19th century and assess the nature and position of various powers struggling for supremacy.

(a) The Mughal Empire and the Mughal Emperor :

When Aurangzeb closed his aged eyes in death (1707) the Mughal Empire had already entered a critical phase of its life. Years of continuous warfare in the Deccan had completely ruined the prosperity of the country. There was agrarian distress; economic ruin and political chaos in the north as well as in the South. The central government found itself helpless to check the recalcitrant elements. The Jats, the Marathas and the Sikhs started their offensive attacks against the Mughal government and their activities struck awe and terror into the



hearts of the people, both Hindus and Muslims. Harcharan Das gives the picture of the inhabitants of Delhi at the time of Jat attacks in these words : "The inhabitants of Delhi roamed from house to house, lane to lane, in despair and bewilderment, like a wrecked ship-tossing on the waves; every one was running about like a lunatic, distracted, puzzled and unable to take care of himself."<sup>1</sup>

The activities of the Marathas, Sikhs, Jats and the Rohillas — every one of whom was anxious to establish its power in the country and yet did not possess the requisite ability to run an all-India administration — reduced the Mughal Empire to a mere shadow. Its prestige suffered at every blow that was dealt on Delhi by these powers. Taking advantage of the weakness of the centre, provincial governors set up independent principalities in Awadh, Bengal and the Deccan. The Mughal Empire shrank to only a few districts around Delhi. With the rise of British power, the Mughal Empire was confined to the Red Fort and the Mughal Emperor to the Saman Burj. In fact the Mughal emperor "ceased to be a person and became an institution."<sup>2</sup>

In the first half of the 19th century the last two Mughal rulers who occupied the throne of Delhi were Akbar Shah II (1806 - 1838) and Bahadur Shah II (1837 - 1857).

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1. Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai (Photograph of Manuscript in British Museum, in Muslim University Library, Aligarh).
  2. Ishwari Prasad, and Subedar, A History of Modern India, Allahabad 1938, p. 135.

Akbar Shah II was a very weak and vacillating ruler. He leaned up<sup>on</sup> the ladies of the harem even in the decision of administrative and political matters. In fact, as Spear says, these women had become "the real directors of his policy."<sup>1</sup>

The three ladies who controlled him and guided the destinies of the crumbling empire were — Qudsia Begum, his mother; Mumtaz Mahal, his favourite wife and Daulat-un-Nisa Begum, his paternal aunt. Even in political discussions and negotiations they took a leading part. "The king himself," wrote Holford, "took little part in conversation, but occasionally explained or confirmed such of their observations as had reference to his own feelings or wishes."<sup>2</sup> The economic position of the Emperor became so weak that the silver ceiling of Diwan-i-Khas was removed and sold in the market to meet growing demands on the royal purse. The copper ceiling of Diwan-i-Am was used for minting coins.<sup>3</sup> The palace gave the impression of a place surrounded by paupers and penury stricken people. Sir Sayyid says that during this time his maternal grandfather Khwaja Farid Uddin was called by Akbar Shah in order to set right the economic affairs of the palace but the vested interests of the royal court made him helpless and he saw no alternative but to resign and retire.

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1. Twilight of the Mughuls, p. 41.

2. Holford's Memorandum on the Affairs of Delhi. India Office Home Misc. 336.

3. Sirat-i-Faridiya, Sir Sayyid, pp. 25-26.

At this time the poverty of the salatin (collaterals of the emperor) had reached such a stage that they used to shout from the roofs of their houses : "We are starving! We are starving!"<sup>1</sup> There were thousands of Salatin who were living on pensions in the palace. They were not permitted to go out of the palace in order to earn their livelihood. Such a thing was considered derogatory to Mughal prestige.

Akbar Shah wanted to nominate Mirza Jahangir as his successor, but Lord Minto refused to recognize this nomination and forbade the Resident to attend his installation. Lord Minto defined his attitude towards the Mughal ruler as "a complimentary recognition of a nominal sovereignty." But he recommended an increase in the royal stipend in fulfilment of the pledges made earlier by Wellesley. Two years later, the Directors wrote in a despatch:

"We conceive that your power in India is at this day of a character too substantial to require that we should resort to the hazardous expedient of endeavouring to add to its stability by borrowing from the king of Delhi any portion of authority which we are competent to exercise in our own name. True policy prescribes that we should rest satisfied with the degree of respect, submission and attachment which our strength and skill in arms, our wisdom and beneficence in governing may procure for us. Our pre-eminence over the Native states in these qualities is, we trust, sufficiently conspicuous and acknowledged. If therefore it is unnecessary to derive from the king of Delhi any additional title to the Allegiance of our Indian subjects, we cannot be disposed to permit any attempts to withdraw their obedience from their supervisors, and to convert this nominal into a real supremacy. The course which appears to us the most proper to be pursued,

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1. Sirat-i-Faridiya. pp. 23 - 24.

and which has in fact been hitherto been pursued with respect to His Majesty the king of Delhi, is to leave his authority in the state in which we found it, and to afford the Royal Family the means of subsistence, not merely in a state of comfort but of decent splendour not unsuitable to the descendants of a fallen but illustrious House, to whose power we have in a great measure succeeded."<sup>1</sup>

This despatch shows the Company's policy for raise the material condition of the Emperor but to depress his sovereign status but what was actually done that his position was reduced without any material facilities being provided to him. Akbar Shah decided to send Raja Ram Mohan Roy as his envoy to London and represent his case to the British government. The Raja made a very able presentation of the case but nothing came out of the trouble he, took in advocating an almost 'lost case'.

Bahadur Shah II who succeeded Akbar Shah in 1837 had to face an even more impossible situation. Lord Ellenborough abolished the practice of nazar because "he deemed that the offer of this inferior token of feudal submission is inconsistent with the relative position of the King of Delhi" Bahadur Shah remonstrated but he did not get back his nazrs. "The episode of the nazrs," remarks Spear, "is the outstanding example of the changed attitude towards the Mughul family. For what was abolished with the agent's nazr was not a recognition of the king's claims as the ruler of India, but the recognition of his status as king."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Political Despatch to Bengal (1811) para 199.
  2. Twilight of the Mughals, pp. 57 - 58.

Bahadur Shah was a prince of literary tastes<sup>and</sup> had created round him a circle of poets, scholars, divines etc., but it was difficult for him to control the political trends and tendencies of the period. There was corruption and intrigue at the court. Thousands of idle salatin roamed about and created nuisance. Sir Sayyid Ahmad gives a very grotesque picture of Bahadur Shah in the following words:

"The ex-king had a fixed idea that he could transform himself into fly or gnat, and that he could in this guise convey himself to other countries and learn what was going on there. Seriously, he firmly believed that he possessed the power of transformation."<sup>1</sup>

This may be a rather harsh assessment of Bahadur Shah's character but it goes without saying that the atmosphere at his court was of indolence, lethargy, corruption, intrigue, betrayal and treachery. But one thing can hardly be denied. Though the Mughal emperor was nothing more than the phantom of a forgotten glory but in the political consciousness of the people he was a symbol of India's political unity. The fact that when the Indians rose against the British in 1857, all those powers, even the Marathas, Jats & others, who had been hostile to Mughal power for centuries, gathered round, Bahadur Shah shows that they looked upon the Mughal Emperor as a symbol of India's political individuality.

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1. Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind, p. 32.

(b) The Sikh Power in the Punjab :

The political instability and Chaos in northern India which came in the wake of the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, helped the rise of the Sikh power in the Punjab. In the 19th century the Sikh presence in the Punjab influenced considerably the political thought and activity of the Muslims.

Ranjit Singh who was endowed with an iron will and a "selfish, treacherous, crafty, persevering, brave and avaricious" spirit, began his career as a soldier but soon became the ruler of the Punjab and made Lahore his capital in 1799. The British also at this time were anxious for an alliance with the Maharaja on account of the fear of a French invasion through Persia, Afghanistan and the Punjab. Charles Metcalfe was sent to the court of Ranjit Singh to negotiate terms of treaty by which the cis-Sutlej states would be relieved and the British would secure the alliance of Ranjit Singh. The British envoy waited upon him at Qasur, but the negotiations failed. Subsequently, David Ochterlony marched with a strong British army to the Sutlej and took up his position at Ludhiana. Ranjit Singh demanded that he should withdraw the British troops to Karnal. The attitude of the British had changed on receiving news that Napoleon had given up his idea of invading India. On the 9th of February Ochterlony issued a proclamation that the cis-Sutlej States had been taken under the British protection and aggressions on the part of Ranjit Singh would be firmly resisted. This produced the desired effect

and Ranjit Singh agreed to the Treaty of Amritsar on April 25, 1809. The British Government left Ranjit Singh master of the country north of the Sutlej, and got a promise that he would not maintain troops to the south of that river more than what was necessary for ordinary administrative purposes and that he would not enroach upon the territories of other cis-Sutlej states.

The Maharaja consolidated his power in the areas where his position was guaranteed by the British. The affairs in Afghanistan being in confusion at that time, Ranjit Singh thought of expansion towards the West. When Shah Shuja was exiled from Afghanistan and he came over to India, Ranjit Singh opened negotiations with him and promised his help in recovering Multan and Kashmir. Under pressure Ranjit Singh obtained the Koh-i-Nur diamond from him and never kept the promises he had made.

In 1819 Ranjit Singh established his hold over Kashmir also and obtained possession of Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan on the banks of the river Indus. In 1822 he demanded tribute from the governor of Peshawar, who offered some horses as a mark of submission. In 1823 Ranjit Singh defeated the Afghans at Nawshera. The occupation of the frontier was stoutly opposed by the Muslims, but Ranjit Singh succeeded in establishing his power and became master of the vast territory from the Khyber to the Sutlej and from Kashmir to Multan. This situation found reaction in the resistance movement organized by Sayyid Ahmad Shahid whose ideology and activities will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Ranjit Singh's chief political objective was to organize a Sikh State over the entire region extending to the mouth of the Indus by crushing a number of Muslim states. This brought him into conflict with the British interests but both proceeded cautiously avoiding a conflict.

Early in 1831 a deputation from Lahore waited upon Lord William Bentinck at Simla. Bentinck deputed Captain Wade, the Political Agent at Ludhiana, to arrange an interview between him and Ranjit Singh. The meeting took place at Ropar, on the banks of the Sutlej. It lasted a week and the relations between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the British became closer. Ranjit Singh offered equal division of Sind but Bentinck did not encourage the idea. In 1843 Sir Charles Napier accomplished, what he himself described as "a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality" and annexed the whole of Sind.

However, during a short period Sikh rule distinguished itself as a strong power to be reckoned with. It became difficult for the Muslims to directly challenge its authority and resistance required a strong, organized and well-planned movement. The flight of the Muslims under the Sikh rule was extremely miserable. They not only lived a most disgraceful life but were subjected to all sorts of cruel treatment and tortures.

The following statement issued for jihad against the Sikhs throws light on the condition of the Muslims of the Punjab:



"The Sikh nation have long held sway in Lahore and other places. Their oppressions have exceeded all bounds. Thousands of Muhammadans have they unjustly killed, and on thousands they have heaped disgrace. No longer do they allow the call to prayer from the Mosques, and the killing of cows they have entirely prohibited. When at last their insulting tyranny could no more be endured, Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad (may his fortunes and blessings ever abide) having for his single object the protection of the Faith, took with him a few Musalmans, and, going in the direction of Kabul and Peshawar, succeeded in rousing Muhammadans from their slumber of indifference, and nerving their courage for action. Praise be to God, some thousands of believers became ready at his call to tread the path of God's service, and on the 21st December, 1826, the jihad against the infidel Sikhs begins."<sup>1</sup>

This statement which reflects the state of affairs at this time and the gravity of the situation, was carried throughout the northern India. When the Muslim struggle against the Sikhs began under the leadership of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, the British government decided to simply watch the events and maintain an attitude of strict neutrality. Sir Sayyid informs us : "Thousands of Muhammadans armed with weapons and a large store of war materials were collected for jihad against the Sikhs. The Commissioner and the Magistrate, who were informed of it, brought it to the notice of the Government but the Government clearly wrote to them not to interfere."<sup>2</sup> Infact they thought that whichever side was defeated the victory was of the British.

(c) The British Power :

This will not be proper to trace here the stages of evolution leading to the establishment of British power in India. The

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1. Taken from a tract published in the Province of Oudh.
2. Institute Gazette dated September 8, 1871.

East India Company started as a Commercial company and in no time transformed itself into a ruling power. Edmund Burke very correctly remarked : "East India Company did not seem to be merely a Company formed for the extension of the British Commerce, but in reality a delegation of the whole power and sovereignty of this kingdom sent into the East."<sup>1</sup>

While the credit for the establishment of British supremacy goes to Marquiss of Wallesley,<sup>2</sup> the credit for the idea of establishing territorial Empire in India goes to Dupleix. "It is customary with the English in this country to proceed very carefully. They work with far-sightedness and caution. They are always careful that a wrong step might interfere with their administrative responsibility and create chaos in the country. Consequently whenever they sense any danger in the north part of the country, they send their armies in that direction and establish their garrisons there so that if any enemy raises his head against them, he may be suppressed forth with. Wherever they discover any weakness, they immediately attend to it. This is the great quality of Englishmen that they do their job at the appropriate time."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Edmund Burke, Speeches in the trial of Warren Hastings, as quoted in Cambridge History of India, Vol.V, p. 182.
  2. He was appointed Governor General in 1798.
  3. Khwaja Hasan Nizami — Delhi Ka Akhri Sans, p. 106.

Within a period of hundred years from the Battle of Plassey (June 27, 1757), India was forced to accept the supremacy of the British. They brought an iconoclastic trend and socio-economic revolution in the country, destroyed the old institutions and gave birth to new social, political and economic order, or in other words the East India Company imported the first phase of capitalism in India.

With the advent of the British power in India, the political, social, and economic condition of the Mussalmans underwent a radical change. Even W.W.Hunter admits in his book the atrocities committed on the Muslims by the British. He says : "There is no use shutting our ears to the fact that the Indian Muhammadans arraign us on a list of charges as serious as was ever brought against a government. They accuse us of having closed every honourable walk of life to professors of their creed. They accuse us of having introduced a system of education which has landed it in contempt and beggary. They accuse us of having brought misery into thousands of families by abolishing their law officers ..... Above all, they charge us with deliberate malversation of their religious foundations and with misappropriation on the largest scale of their educational funds." All sorts of employments were closed for the Muslims and the British began to patronize and help the Hindus. Hunter writes : "All sorts of employment, great and small, are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammadans, and bestowed on men of other races, particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye,

yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Muhammadans in its Gazetters for exclusion from official posts. Recently when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sundarbans Commissioner, that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus. In short, the Muhammadans have now sunk so low, that even when qualified for Government employ, they are studiously kept out of it by Government notifications. Nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not deign even to acknowledge their existence."<sup>1</sup>

The Englishmen regarded Muslims as the enemies of Christianity and the Government.<sup>2</sup> Macaulay once revealed that Clive was dead against the Muslims and was not willing to give them any post of responsibility.<sup>3</sup> The reason, in the eyes of an Englishman was : "For some reasons or the other they (the Muslims) hold aloof from our system, and the changes in which the more flexible Hindus have acquiesced, are regarded, by them as deep personal wrongs."<sup>4</sup>

A Muslim petition which was handed over to the Commissioner of Orissa, reveals the miserable plight of the Muslims of that time. It says : "As loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty

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1. The Indian Mussalmans, p. 175, II Edition (London) 1872.
  2. Muhammad Tufayl, p. 160.
  3. Lambrick, H.T., Sir Charles Napier and Sind, p. 28.
  4. W.W.Hunter - Indian Musalmans, p. 11, Second Edition (London) 1872.

the Queen we have, we believe, an equal claim to all appointments in the administration of the country. Truly speaking, the Orissa Muhammadans have been levelled down and down, with no hopes of raising again. Born of noble parentage, poor by profession and destitute of patrons, we find ourselves in the position of a fish out of water. Such is the wretched state of the Muhammadans, which we bring into your Honour's notice, believing your Honour to be sole representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen for the Orissa Division, and hoping that justice will be administered to all classes, without distinction of colour or creed. The penniless and parsimonious condition which we are reduced to, consequent on the failure of our former Government service, has thrown us into such an ever lasting despondency, that we speak from the very core of our hearts, that we would travel into the remotest corners of the earth, ascend the snowy peaks of the Himalya, wander the forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so travelling we would be blessed with a Government appointment of ten shillings a week.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from its social and political implications, the rise of the British power in India had certain serious economic consequences. Formerly Indian goods were exported from India by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Arabs, but now these exports disappeared completely and India remained a source of raw materials and this reduced the national income.

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1. Mr. E.W. Molony, C.S., Quoted by Hunter, p. 176.

Indian craftsman suffered a serious blow on the fall of the landed aristocracy. The invention of power-loom destroyed the remnant of industries. The British destroyed the Indian industrial centres of Surat, Dacca, Murshidabad and other places. The arts of spinning and weaving which for ages afforded employment to thousands were deliberately destroyed in the interest of British factories of Manchester and London.

It is in this context of the nominal Mughal authority of Delhi, the stern and harsh administration of the Sikhs in the Punjab and the rising tide of British Imperialism over the whole of northern India that the political thought and attitudes of the contemporary Muslims have been studied in the following pages.

## C H A P T E R     I I

### SHAH ABDUL AZIZ AND HIS POLITICAL IDEAS

The most seminal personality in the history of Indian Islam in the 18th century was that of Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi (1703-1762). He was not only a religious teacher of great eminence but a clear-headed political thinker also. The Mughal Empire crumbled to pieces before his eyes and the country passed into an ever-deeping economic crisis in his life time. Born in such an age of political and economic disintegration, he applied his mind to an analysis of the causes of political decay and economic chaos. According to Dr. Tara Chand he, "was confronted with some of the knotliest problems of Society and State, of religion, ethics and politics ..... in the sphere of politics he was probably the only Muslim thinker who had a clear insight into the intimate relations between ethics, politics and economics. His conception of justice invites comparison with that of Plato in its comprehensiveness and depth. The process of thought by which they arrived at the idea were, however, different. Wali Ullah's philosophy contained valuable elements of thought which, if properly developed, could have helped in the solution of the tangled problems of Indian life, but unfortunately the times were adverse and the philosopher's resources inadequate."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Tara Chand, History of India's Freedom, p. 207.

In his monumental work Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah he gives the following reasons for the political and economic crisis of his age:

"The ruin of the State these days is due to two reasons: Firstly, pressure on the public treasury which is due to the fact that the people have developed a habit of obtaining money from the exchequer without performing a corresponding duty. They either come out with the excuse that they are soldiers or 'ulama and have therefore a claim on the treasury : or they claim to belong to that group of men to whom the king himself presents rewards i.e., pious Sufis or poets or other groups who receive stipends without doing any service to the State. These people diminish the sources of other people's income and are a burden on the economy. The second cause of this widespread desolation is the heavy taxation on peasants, merchants and workers and unjust dealings with these groups. The result is that all those who are loyal to the State and obey its orders are being slowly ruined. The refractory and the evaders of taxes are becoming more refractory and they do not pay the taxes. The prosperity of a country depends upon light taxes and reasonable and necessary appointments in the army and other departments. The people should clearly understand this secret."<sup>1</sup>

A man with a very sensitive soul and a keen observant eye, Shah Wali Ullah lived through a period of anarchy and war in the country and witnessed the failure of the Mughals to control the contumacious elements. He completely lost faith in the Mughal Empire as well as in the institution of hereditary monarchy<sup>2</sup> which killed all democratic spirit, developed narrow mindedness of the ruling class, led to economic exploitation of the people, placed

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1. Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah, Vol. I, p. 79.

2. Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah, I p. 199.



unnecessary burden of taxation on the people and increased, the misery and oppression of the peasants and the artisans. He boldly criticized the ruling class for its exploitation of the masses, its corruption and inertia. He reacted to the attitude of the nobility in these words."

"Oh Amirs ! Do you not fear God? (How is it that) you have so completely thrown yourself into the pursuit of momentary pleasures, and have neglected those people who were committed to your care ! The result is that the strong are devouring the (weak) people.....All your mental faculties are directed towards providing yourselves with sumptuous food and softskinned and beautiful women for enjoyment and pleasure. You do not turn your attention to anything except good clothes and magnificent palaces."1

He was also critical of the attitude of the soldiers and advised them to inculcate the true spirit of jihad and discipline. In his writings one hears the distant echoes of a democratic spirit which viewed the existing political and social structure from the point of view of a common man, something which was unique in those days. The way he addresses the people to play their legitimate role in the political life gives a significant democratic touch to his whole approach. He stressed the need of equity and justice in the life of the individual and equilibrium (tawazun) in economic relationship, which could alone help in building a sound and stable political structure. He agreed with Plato and Aristotle to promote the virtue and intelligence of the people themselves.

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1. Tafhimat-i-Ilahia, published by the Majlis-i-Ilmi, Dehail, as quoted in Shah Waliullah Number of Alfurqan, pp. 134-135.

His political ideas centred round the growing needs of the workers, the artisans and the peasants and these ideas could only be practiced in the peaceful conditions and consequently he directed his energy for the restoration of peace and tranquility in the country.

And in the religious sphere he broke the monopoly of the religious classes by translating the Quran into Persian and making its content intelligible to all people. Thus Shah Wali Ullah played a very vital role in the political and religious life of the people.

His thought determined the drift and direction of Muslim political and religious thought of the succeeding generations. The most obvious impact of his thinking could be seen in the life and activities of his son Shah Abdul Aziz who succeeded to his father's chair in the Madrasa-i-Rahmiya at the age of 18 and continued his work in both the political and the academic sphere. In fact his thought is more relevant to our discussion as he lived upto 1824.

#### LIFE OF SHAH ABDUL AZIZ:

Shah Abdul Aziz, the eldest son of Shah Wali Ullah, was born in 1159 A.H./1746 A.D. Ghulam Halim is his chronogrammatic name indicating the year of his birth.<sup>1</sup> He received his early education from two eminent disciples of his father, Khwaja

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1. Tuhfa-i-Ithna Ashariyya, p. 10.

Muhammad Amin and Shaikh Muhammad Ashiq of Phulat. Then he entered the seminary, Madrasa-i-Rahimiya, of his father and made a thorough study of the Masabih, the Musawwah fi Sharh Muwatta and the Sihah Sitta. He possessed a prodigious memory. He learnt the classical collections of ahadis, the Siha Sitta, almost by heart. He thus completed his education at the feet of his father Shah Wali Ullah in 1174/1760 while still in his teens. In 1763 he succeeded to the chair of his father at the Madrasa-i-Rahimiya and began to instruct the students in religious sciences, particularly the Quran and the Hadis. People came from far and near to learn at his feet. He carried the ideas of his father to a wider circle than he had been able to do. Amongst his pupils appear the names<sup>1</sup> of Shah Rafi Uddin Dihlawi, Shah Abdul Qadir Dihlawi, Shah Muhammad Ishaq, Shah Muhammad Yaqub, Shah Abdul Hai, Shah Muhammad Ismail, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Maulana Rashid Uddin Dihlawi, Shah Ghulam Ali Dihlawi, Hasan Ali Lakhnawi, Shah Rauf Ahmad Shah Fazl-ur-Rahman Ganj Moradabadi, Shah Abu Said, Shah Zahurul Haq, Awlad Husain (father of Nawab Siddiqi Hasan Khan) — all well-known figures in the realm of Muslim religious learning.

Of the works that Shah Abdul Aziz wrote on various topics of religion the Fath ul Aziz,<sup>2</sup> Bustan ul Muhaddisin,<sup>3</sup> Ujala-i-Nafia,<sup>4</sup>

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1. See Tazkira-i-Ulama-i-Hind, Lucknow 1914, pp. 172, 47, 50-51, 66-67, 162-163, 56-57, 145, 172.

2. Published Lucknow, 1268 A.H.

3. Published Delhi, 1893 A.H.

4. Published Lahore, 1302 A.H.

Tuhfa-i-Isna-i-Ashariya<sup>1</sup> and Zikr-ul-Shahadat-ain<sup>2</sup> deserve particular mention. Shah Abdul Aziz died on the 7th of Shawwal 1239/1824.

#### HIS POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTIVITIES :

Shah Abdul Aziz lived in Delhi for nearly 78 years. During this period Delhi passed through one of the most momentous periods of her history. From the third battle of Panipat (1761) to the entry of Lord Lake's forces in Delhi (1803), he saw Delhi passing through many political vicissitudes. This quick drama of political change conditioned his political thought. Significantly enough, while he condemned the Sikh, the Jat and Maratha depredations, he did not declare the country under their control as Dar-ul-Harb, but when the British power was established in northern India — though it had checked the instable conditions prevailing previously — he issued a fatwa declaring all land under the British occupation as Dar-ul-Harb.

The fatwa runs as follows:<sup>3</sup>

".....In this city (Delhi) the Imam ul-Muslimin wields no authority. The real power rests with Christian officers. There is no check on them; and the promulgation of the commands of Kufr means that in administration and justice, in matters of law and order, in the domain of trade, finance and collection of revenues —

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1. Nawal Kishore Press, 1896.

2. Published Delhi, 1869.

3. Fatawa-i-Azizi, Matba-i-Mujtabai, Delhi, 1311 A.H., p. 17.

everywhere the Kuffar (infidals) are in power. Yes, there are certain Islamic rituals, e.g. Friday and Eid prayers, azan and cow-slaughter, with which they brook no interference; but the very root of all these rituals is of no value to them. They demolish mosques without the least hesitation and no Muslim or any Zimmi can enter into the city or its suburbs but with their permission. It is in their own interests if they do not object to the travellers and traders to visit the city. On the other hand, distinguished persons like Shuja-ul-Mulk and Wilayat-i Begum cannot dare visit the city without their permission. From here (Delhi) to Calcutta the Christians are in complete control. There is no doubt that in principalities like Hyderabad, Rampur, Lucknow, etc., they have left the administration in the hands of the local authorities; but it is because they have accepted their lordship and have submitted to their authority."

To appreciate clearly the significance of this fatwa, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between Dar-ul-Islam and the Dar-ul-Harb.

In Muslim constitutional law the world is divided into Dar-ul-Harb and Dar-ul-Islam. Dar-ul-Islam or an 'abode of Islam is a country where the ordinances of Islam are established and which is under the rule of a Muslim Sovereign. Its inhabitants are Muslims and also non-Muslims who have submitted to Muslims control and who, under certain restrictions and without the possibility of full citizenship, are guaranteed their lives and property by the Muslim State. The Dar-ul-Harb or the Abode of War is that which is not, but which, actually or potentially, is a seat of war for Muslims until by conquest it is turned into 'Abode of Islam'. Thus to turn dar-ul-harb into dar-ul-Islam is the object of jihad, and theoretically, the Muslim State is in a constant state of warfare with the non-Muslim world.

The 'Abode of Islam' does not become 'Abode of War' except on the following conditions:

- i. that the legal decisions of unbelievers are regarded and those of Islam are not;
- ii. that the country immediately adjoins an abode of war, no Muslim country coming between;
- iii. that there is no longer protection for Muslim and their non-Muslim dhimmis.

Of these, the first is the most important, and some have even held that so long as a single legal decision (hukum) of Islam is observed and maintain<sup>ed</sup> a country cannot become a dar-ul-Harb, when a Muslim country does become a dar-ul-harb, it is the duty of all Muslims to withdraw from it, and a wife who refuses to accompany her husband in this, is in so fact divorced.<sup>1</sup>

Now this fatwa has a significance of its own in the history of Muslim political thought of the 19th century. It was the first and determined expression of Muslim attitude towards the establishment of British rule in India. That in 1857 people often referred to this fatwa<sup>2</sup> shows the extent to which it had influenced the contemporary Muslim thought. The following aspects of this fatwa deserve particular mention:

- (1) Shah Abdul Aziz had been at the helm of academic life in Delhi since 1763 when his father breathed his last. During the period 1763-1803 he saw Delhi

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1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, pp. 68-69.

2. W.W.Hunter, The Indian Musalmans, Calcutta, 1945, p. 134.

being subjected to frequent depredations and plunders by the Jats, the Sikhs, and the Marathas. In his Arabic poems<sup>1</sup> he has referred to the atrocities committed by them. In 1771 he had seen the Marathas occupy the city of Delhi and Visaji being appointed as the collector of the revenues of Delhi and the districts around the capital.<sup>2</sup> In 1784 Mahadji Sindhia was the regent at Delhi.<sup>3</sup> — But Shah Abdul Aziz did not declare India as Dar-ul-Harb on that account.

- (2) His opposition to the establishment of British rule in India was not due to any religious reasons (he confesses that the English people do not interfere in the performance of Islamic rituals), but due to the fact that in "administration and in justice, in matters of law and order, in the domain of trade, finance and collection of revenues" they had become all-powerful.

Shah Abdul Aziz was not satisfied merely with the pronouncement of the fatwa. He went further and gave a lead in organizing the resistance movements. As he was too old to participate in it actively he sent Sayyid Ahmad Bareilwi to the camp of Amir Ali Khan in Rajputana who was fighting against the British in collaboration with Jaswant Rao Holkar.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Hayat-i-Wali, p. 328 - 329.  
2. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, pp. 21-22.  
3. Sarkar, Fall, Vol. III, p. 203 et seq.  
4. Details infra in chapter

While Shah Abdul Aziz was exhorting his followers to resist the establishment of British rule in India, he was quick in realizing the great potentialities of Western science and learning. He permitted his pupils to acquire knowledge of English and praised the technical skill of the Englishmen.<sup>1</sup> This position was extremely realistic and enlightened. "This position was not, however, maintained by the succeeding generations. Those who studied the English language and sciences willingly accepted British rule, and those who refused to accept British rule totally refused to learn the English language and literature. As was inevitable, two diametrically opposite tendencies developed in Muslim religious and social attitudes, one represented by the Aligarh movement under Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the other by the Deobandi school of thought under Mawlana Muhammad Qasim."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Malfuzat-i-Shah Abdul Aziz, p. 51; Fatawa-i-Azizi, p. 196.
  2. Ency. of Islam, Revised Edition article on Hind — Islam by Prof. K.A.Nizami.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE WAHHABI IDEOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON INDO-MUSLIM POLITICAL THOUGHT

The trials of Ambala (1864), Patna (1865), Malda (1870) and Rajmahal (1870) highlighted the presence and the impact of the Wahhabi doctrines on the Indian political life. The publication of W.W.Hunter's book The Indian Mussalmans in 1872 further brought the Wahhabis into the forefront, though he made a rather too wide an application of the term and put every one who did not like the British government in the category of Wahhabis. The term Wahhabi consequently became a bye-word for a rebel. Since Hunter's use of the word Wahhabi had created suspicion and fear in the minds of the Englishmen against a very large number of Muslims, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan wrote a review on Hunter's book and refuted many of his charges. The position, however, was that the Wahhabi ideology had exercised a very deep influence on the religious and political life of the Indian Muslims in the first half of the 19th century.

Wahhabism derives its name from Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab (1703-1783), one of the most powerful personalities in the history of Islamic people in the 18th century.

Abdul Wahhab studied at Medina under Sulaiman al-Kurdi and Muhammad Hayat of Sind.<sup>1</sup> For several years he travelled far

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1. See Margoliouth's article in the Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 618.

and wide in the Arab countries and returned home impressed with the idea that Islam, as practised by his contemporaries, had deviated widely from the orthodox practice and theory, as practised by the Prophet and the Quran. He therefore made up his mind to purge it had restore it to its primitive strictness. He drew his inspiration primarily from Ibn Taimiya.<sup>1</sup>

Margoliouth has thus summarised the chief doctrines of the Wahhabis on the basis of Lam'al-Shihab fi sirat Muhammad Abdul Wahhab:

1. All objects of worship other than Allah are false and all who worship such deserve death.
2. The bulk of mankind are not monotheists, since they endeavour to win God's favour by visiting the tombs of saints; their practice therefore resembles what is recorded in the Quran of the Meccan murshrikin.
3. It is polytheism (shirk) to introduce the name of a prophet, saint, or angel into a prayer.
4. It is shirk to seek intercession from any but Allah.
5. It is shirk to make vows to any other being.
6. It involves unbelief (kufir) to profess knowledge not based on the Quran, the Sunna, or the necessary inferences of the reason.
7. It involves unbelief and heresy (ilhad) to deny Qadar in all acts.
8. It involves unbelief to interpret the Quran to tawil.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 618.

2. Encyclopaedia of Islam, article on Wahhabiya, p.618 et seq.

But this theological puritanism alone did not exhaust the basic ideology of the Wahhabis. They believed in influencing the political life also and this brought them into conflict with the political powers of the day. When Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab reached Dariya and built a mosque, he instructed people not only in his Kitab ul Tawhid, but gave instruction in the use of fire arms also.<sup>1</sup> There was conflict with the Shaikh of Riyaz which lasted 28 years. The Wahhabis built a fort at every place that they captured and appointed a qazi and a mufti at every such place. Philby has described in detail how the power of the Wahhabis increased under Ibn Sa'ud. In 1792 Abdul Wahhab died at the age of 89. The Wahhabi activities continued as usual and Philby says that in 1811 "the Wahhabi empire extended from Aleppo in the north to the Indian Ocean (?) and from the Persian Gulf and the Iraq frontier in the east to the Red Sea."<sup>2</sup>

The Wahhabi doctrines spread into many Muslim countries. We find them active in Egypt, Arabia, Afghanistan and Iraq. Schuyler mentions the presence of Wahhabi preachers in Khojend.<sup>3</sup> What helped them in the propagation of their views was the fact that with Hejaz as their headquarter they could very easily establish contact with the large number of pilgrims who thronged there from almost every part of the Muslim world.

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1. Margoliouth, Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 619.
  2. H. St. John Philby, Arabia, London 1930.
  3. Turkistan, London, 1867, Vol. II, p. 254.

When did the ideas of Abdul Wahhab reach India? It is difficult to answer this question. His name does not appear in the religious literature produced in India during the 18th century. It is, however, not improbable that Shah Wali Ullah came into contact with the Wahhabis during his visit to Hejaz. In his Persian translation of the Quran, Fath ur Rahman, he remarks at one place that he had come to know the movements and conditions of the Muslim world during his stay in Arabia. If Tuhfat ul-Muwahhidin is not incorrectly attributed to Shah Wali Ullah, it can hardly be denied that he had been deeply impressed by the Wahhabi doctrines. However, Shah Wali Ullah had his own ideology in which he could not successfully weave the anti-sufi teachings of Abdul Wahhab and therefore his attachment with the Wahhabi movement is not definite. Lately the authorship of Tuhfat ul-Muwahhidin has become the subject of controversy<sup>1</sup> and it is very doubtful if Shah Wali Ullah ever wrote it.

The Wahhabi ideology came to India some decades after the death of Shah Wali Ullah. It was Sayyid Ahmad of Rai Bareilly who, during his visit to Mecca in 1822-1823, was deeply impressed by the Wahhabi ideology and on his return to India organized his work on the lines of Abdul Wahhab. To quote Hunter,

"Whatever was dreaming in his nature now gave place to a fiery ecstasy, in which he beheld himself planting the Crescent throughout every district of India..... Whatever had been indistinct in his teaching, hence-

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1. Al-Rahim

forth assumed the precision of that force, formulated theology, by which 'Abdul Wahhab had founded a great kingdom of Arabia, and which Sayyid Ahmad hoped would enable him to rear a still greater and more lasting Empire in India."<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Ahmad was fully conscious that lost political supremacy in India could be re-established only by starting a struggle in the north and consolidating power in the north west frontier which could be used as a base of operations for further expansion in the country.

Sayyid Ahmad had already won favour for his movement in India and founded a permanent head quarter at Patna, appointed four Khalifas and an Imam and finally in 1824 he was on the Peshawar frontier. December 31, was fixed for Jihad and inspite of all powerful resistance by the Sikhs he established himself temporarily in Peshawar. He himself performed the duties of a military commander. The endless stream of army poured into the Punjab through Khyber Pass but theological controversies weakened his rank and he met his end at Balakot fighting with the Sikhs in 1831.

Though his untimely death prevented a possible Wahhabi conquest of northern India, the movement was carried on with great zeal. His followers succeeded in injecting disaffection and hatred against the British Raj through out India. After the conquest of the Punjab the Wahhabis came into direct conflict

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1. W.W.Hunter — The Indian Musalmans, Second Edition, London, 1872, p. 61.

with the British. The English had to face a number of costly wars on the Frontier. But the British were better equipped and better organized and so the Wahhabi movement was mercilessly crushed during the years 1860-1870.

The most difficult situation faced by the British in the beginning of the 19th century was due to the uncompromising attitude of the Wahhabis. They greatly influenced the Rohillas, who fifty years before were tried by Warren Hastings to meet their end became a constant headache for the British. It was the result of the success of the Wahhabi movement which brought the peasants of South Bengal to the scene under the leadership of Titu Miyan and came to be known as the 'Faraizi' movement. Both these movements were inspired by a desire to resuscitate classical Islam through the reform of Muslim Society and restoration of its political power.

After the death of Sayyid Ahmad the leadership of the movement passed into the hands of Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali of Patna. The Wahhabis occupied a portion of territory along the Indus and organized a Rebel Camp at Sittana and at the time of annexation of the Punjab by the British they fought with great zeal and the continuous supply of arms and other things from the region of the Gangetic Delta helped in carrying on fight against

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1. W.W.Hunter - Indian Musalmans, p. 66.

the British. Dealing with the nature and complexion of the Wahhabi movement Hunter says :

"The presence of Wahhabis in a district is a standing menace to all classes ..... possessed of property or vested rights ..... Indian Wahhabis are extreme dissenters ..... Anabaptists, Fifth Monarchy men, so to speak, touching matters of faith : Communists and Red Republicans in politics ..... In 1827-30, it was against an obdurate Musalman Governor of Peshawar, quite as much as against the Hindu Sikhs, that their divine leader turned their arms. In the present rising around Calcutta in 1831, they broke into the houses of Musalmans and Hindu land holders with perfect impartiality ..... The official description of the Sect, fifteen years afterwards, "as a gathering of 80,000 men asserting complete equality among themselves, and drawn from the lower class, "would make any landed gentry in the world indignantly uncomfortable. "Every Musalman priest with a dozen acres attached to his mosque or Way side shrine has been shrieking against the Wahhabis during the whole vested interests of the Musalman clergy to back them, and by degrees drew out a learned array to defend their position ..... " Further he says, "They (Wahhabis) appeal boldly to the masses, and, their system whether of religion or of politics, is eminently adopted to the hopes and fears of a restless populace."<sup>1</sup>

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1. W.W.Hunter - The Indian Musalmans, p. 111, Second Edition, London, 1872.

The officer who was the incharge of the Wahhabi prosecution wrote : "I attribute the great hold which Wahhabi doctrines have on the mass of the Muhammadan peasantry to our neglect of their education."<sup>1</sup>

The Wahhabi movement reached its highest watermark/struggle in the of 1857, which is regarded as the first War of liberation to get rid of foreign yoke. But the 'Mutiny' was deemed as a suitable time for the British to take over finally the control of the Indian political power. The British had realized that peace would not return to India unless this widespread and publicly appreciated movement is completely crushed and its organization annihilated. Severest ways were found out to destroy the Wahhabis and ultimately they met their end through persecution which continued for nearly a quarter of a century. Hunter in his book admits that, "the cost of watching the Wahhabis and keeping them without bounds, amounts in a single province to be as much as would suffice for the Administration, judicial and criminal, of a British District containing one third of the whole population of Scotland."<sup>2</sup>

So we find that within a short period of time the Wahhabi movement influenced so much the Indian political thought and attitude that its impact could be felt every where in the country ranging from Peshawar frontier to the Delta of Bengal. It

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1. Mr. James, O Kinealy, C.S.

2. W.W.Hunter, Second Edition, London, 1872, p. 100.



brought about a tremendous change in the political outlook and attitude of the Muslims.

It has become a tendency with some text book writers on the subject to prove the movement as anti-Hindu. But an unprejudiced study shows that it is a fallacy and lack of historical knowledge to say that the movement was directed against the Hindus also. W. Cantwell Smith is justified in saying that, "the necessity of cooperation between Muslims and Hindus in the face of a common enemy was emphasized equally strong."<sup>1</sup>

Later on there appeared a change in the attitude of at least one section of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. They were divided into groups. One of them called themselves Ahl-i-Hadith and did not like the term "Wahhabi". Observing such differences the Government issued instructions not to use the term 'Wahhabi' in official correspondence. They were further divided on petty differences and ultimately having forgotten their main purpose met their end.

#### Trial of important Wahhabi Personalities.

The conquest of the Punjab, brought the British and the Wahhabis into direct conflict and several wars took place on the Frontier. And the British thought that only a ruthless destruction of this sect would bring peace in the country. Many trials

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1. W.C. Smith, p. 190.

and persecution took place which continued for a quarter of a century. When the War of Independence broke out many important personalities at Patna were thrown into jail for nearly three months. W. Tayler, the commissioner of Patna Division carefully watched the activities of Shah Mohammad Husain, Maulvi Ahmad Ullah and Maulvi Waizul Haqq. In his words, "From private information obtained from many sources I had reason to believe that the saintly gentlemen were busying themselves to a very unusual extent, and what rendered their conduct peculiarly suspicious, was that an intimacy appeared to have suddenly spring up between them and one Looft Ali Khan, the rich banker of the city, who being a Sheah, was an unnatural subject for such connexion and who was generally believed to be secretly engaged in traitors designs."<sup>1</sup>

In 1862 some more activities of the Mugahidin were noticed by the British and an hostile correspondence was seized by the Punjab authorities, which was an attempt on the part of the mugaludin to temper with the loyalty of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry at Rawalpindi. The letters clearly showed that men, money and arms were being sent from Patna headquarter, Meerut and Rawalpindi to the Frontier. Seeing all these activities which posed a direct threat to the British power in India, the following eleven personalities, were tried. The first six coming

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1. Tayler, W : The Patna Crisis (London, 1868), p. 47.

from Patna, the next four from Ambala and its neighbourhood and the last named from Raj Shahi.

1. Maulvi Yahya Ali of Sadiqpur, a very active member of the movement. At the time of trial his age was 42;
2. Maulvi Abdur Rahim, a member of the same family. He was 28.
3. Mian Abdul Ghaffar, a servant of Maulvi Yahya Ali, aged 26,
4. Ilahi Bakh, the mukhtar of Maulvi Ahmad Ullah of Sadiqpur.
5. Husaini, son of Meghu of Patna. He was a servant of Ilahi Bakhsh and was of 36 years of age;
6. Abdul Ghafoor, son of Shah 'Ali Khan, of Shahbad. He was 25 years old. At the time of arrest he was staying with Maulvi Muhammad Jafar of Thanesar.
7. Maulvi Muhammad Jafar of Thanesar, aged 28, author of the first biography of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in Urdu,
8. Muhammad Shafi of Ambala, an army contractor who supplied meat to the troop. His head office was at Rawalpindi, but he had his agents in a number of cantonments in northern India.
9. 'Abdul Karim of Ambala, aged 36, the mukhtar and a relation of Muhammad Shafi;
10. Husaini son of Muhammad Bakhs of Thanesar, an assistant of Maulvi Muhammad Jafar. He was 26 years old; and
11. Qazi Mian Jan, according to the judge it was from his house that the major portion of anti-British correspondence was discovered.

Of these eleven persons who were tried at Ambala, the two most important were Maulvi Yahya Ali of Sadiqpur and Maulvi Jafar Thanasari. After a long trial, they were found accused and sentenced three of them, Maulvi Yahya 'Ali, Maulvi Mohammad Jafar, and Maulvi Muhammad Shafi to death and the remaining light to transportation for life. The property of all these was also taken away. The trial showed the amazing net work which the Sadiqpur family had spread throughout the country. All the members worked with strict secrecy under fictitious names,<sup>1</sup> and used code words.

The second important "Wahhabi" trial took place in 1865. The accused was Maulvi Ahmad Ullah of Patna, an influential member of Sadiqpur family. He was arrested during 1857. The court passed on him a sentence of transportation for life.<sup>2</sup>

The immovable property of Amir Khan were attached under the orders of Government. Later his grandson Muhammad Yahya Khan, and Muhammad Zakria Khan, were awarded stipends of Rs. 6 each per month, 'it was raised to Rs. 13/8/- per month for studying at Aligarh. Only gradually the British authorities changed their

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1. Real names along with their fictitious names were:  
Maulvi Yahya Ali = Muhi-ud-din; Maulvi Fayyaz 'Ali = Bashir-ud-din; Maulvi Abdullah = Babu Sahib; Muhammad Shafi = Shafat Ali; Maulvi Abdur Rahim = Rahim Beg; Maulvi Abdullah = Ahmad Ali.

Malka and Sitana, one after the other came to be called Bara God am or biggodown and Patna as chota Godam or small godown.

2. Selection from the Records of Bengal Govt. No. XLII, p.102-103.

attitude towards Wahhabis and these trials came to an end about the year 1886. Extent of Wahhabi Influence — a sample survey of their social affiliations etc:

Recently some material bearing on the Wahhabis has been made available in the Public Records Office at Lahore.<sup>1</sup> These are several files of papers, compiled from the point of view of the British administration on the activities of the 'Wahhabis', both on the North-West. Frontier and in the provinces of British India. One of these files Panjab Civil Secretariat Confidential Annual file No. 210<sup>1</sup>, contains a 'Return of Wahhabis of note in the Punjab compiled from 'the Latest Returns received from District Superintendents of Police' and circulated, on the 28th April, 1876, to all Commissioners and Superintendents, Deputy Commissioners and Deputy Superintendents by Col.H.N.Miller, under-secretary to Government, Panjab, Home (Police) Department.

The data in these return is arranged in nine columns, headed as follows:

1. Division
2. District
3. Serial Number
4. Name (of Wahhabi)
5. Parentage

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1. Dr. P.Hardy has introduced this material in an article "Wahhabis in the Punjab" published in the journal of the Research Society of Pakistan, Vol. I, October, 1964, from which I have quoted the statistical details.

6. Profession or calling
7. Residence (under village and thana)
8. Present or absent (from normal residence) and, if absent, where.
9. Remarks.

The column under 'Remarks' sometimes contains an assessment of the importance of the person named, his reputed wealth or poverty, what role, if any, he played in the events of 1857 and, very occasionally, the statement that he denies being a 'Wahhabi'. The total number of entries in the return is 455. Two points about the return perhaps need emphasis, first that the return is avowedly of 'Wahhabis' of note in the Punjab and not of all 'Wahhabis' in the Panjab. Second, that the list is intended to record the names not only of active workers against British rule (those who, for example, collected and forwarded funds to the 'Wahhabi' collected and forwarded funds to the 'Wahhabi' mujahidin on the North-West Frontier), but also of those who sympathised with or accepted and put into practice the reforming tenets of Sayyid Ahmad of Rae-Bareilly with necessarily being active in resistance to foreign rule.

The data given under the heading 'Profession or calling' is of particular interest as it may help to form, clarify or, perhaps for some, confirm, conclusions about the social strata within the Muslim Community from which the 'Wahhabis' tended mainly to be drawn. The following is the district-wise the occupations of those whom British police officials believed to be 'Wahhabis' in the Punjab in 1876.

Delhi District — 45 entries:

'Wahhabi' breachers	.....	14
Wholesale hide merchants	.....	11
Importers from Europe	.....	3
Wholesale Shoe merchants	.....	8
Wholesale booksellers	.....	4
Delhi College teacher	.....	1
English teacher in Government School.	.....	1
Pickle & Preserve manufacturer	.....	1
Deputy Superintendent, Canal Dept.	.....	1
Seal engraver to the king of Delhi.	.....	1

Gurgaon District — 3 entries:

Maulavis and itinerant preachers	.....	3
Maulavis or 'Wahhabi' propagandists	.....	4

Umballa District — 14 entries:

Booksellers	.....	2
Munshis	.....	4
Shopkeepers	.....	2
Na'ib-Tahsildar	.....	1
No occupation given	.....	1

Ludhiana District — 12 entries:

Cultivators	.....	5
Cultivators and Traders	.....	4
Booksellers	.....	2
Shoe-Seller	.....	1

Firozepur District — 73 entries:

Wahhabi preachers	.....	14
Teachers	.....	7
Students	.....	4
Ikka-drivers	.....	9
Cultivators	.....	30
Pensioners	.....	3
Bookseller	.....	1
Doctor (but denies being a 'Wahhabi')	.....	1
Dyer	.....	1
Weavers	.....	2
Carpenter	.....	1

Julundur District — 19 entries:

Labourers	.....	3
Book-binder	.....	1
Chemist	.....	2
Cultivator	.....	1
Afghan or Pathan (No occupation given)	.....	3
Maulavis	.....	2
Teacher	.....	1
Servant	.....	1
Petition-writer	.....	1
Kapurthala employ	.....	1
Shaikh (no occupation given)	.....	1
Raien	.....	1
No occupation given	.....	1



Hoshiarpur District — 26 entries:

Teachers	.....	4
Agriculturalists or landholders	.....	10
Deputy Inspectors of Police	.....	2
Doctor or Physician	.....	2
Persian Teacher	.....	1
Mulla	.....	1
Shopkeeper	.....	1
Chief Muharrir, Education Dept.	.....	1
Peshi Munshis	.....	2
Professional beggar	.....	1
Weaver	.....	1

Amritsar District — 10 entries:

Mullas	.....	3
Cloth merchants	.....	1
Shawl merchant	.....	1
Weaver	.....	1
Book-binder	.....	1
Na'ib Zila'dar	.....	1
Sarishtadar	.....	1
Pathan (No occupation given)	.....	1

Gurdaspur District — 37 entries:

Maulavis, Mualanas or Qazis	.....	11
Masons	.....	5
Cultivators	.....	5
Soldier (Jama'dar)	.....	1

Boot-makers	.....	2
Shoe-seller	.....	1
Weavers	.....	2
Leather worker	.....	1
Lambardar	.....	1
Service	.....	1
Butcher	.....	1
Blacksmith	.....	1
Mukhtarkar	.....	1
Faqir	.....	1
No occupation given	.....	3

Lahore District — 35 entries:

Maulavis and Imams of mosques	.....	12
Merchants and traders	.....	4
Vaccinator	.....	1
Government employ (one denial)	.....	5
Clerks	.....	2
Qazi	.....	1
Bookseller	.....	1
Dealer in Skins	.....	1
Pleader	.....	1
Messengers	.....	4
Native doctor	.....	1
Teacher	.....	1
No occupation specified (formerly in Education Dept.)	.....	1

Multan District — 6 entries:

Maulavi	.....	1
Carpet makers, wool and thread traders	.....	2
Paper maker	.....	1
Tailor and police uniform contractor	.....	1
No Occupation given (Under Multan District the return States that, 'the sect is not active in this district — Mooltani Muhammadans are not over-zealous').	.....	1

Montgomery District — 26 entries:

Mullas	.....	5
Agriculturalists	.....	9
Mendicaries	.....	3
Teachers	.....	3
Service, government	.....	5
Bookseller	.....	1

Sialkot District — 3 entries:

Head teacher	.....	1
Zamindar	.....	1
Mulla	.....	1

Gujranwala District — 15 entries:

Maulavi	.....	12
Lambardars	.....	2
Bookseller and pensioner of Government.	.....	1

Rawalpindi District — 13 entries:

Mulla	.....	1
Butchers	.....	2
Cahudharis	.....	3
Booksellers	.....	2
Shopkeepers	.....	2
Sheriff	.....	1
Leather worker	.....	1
Khadam	.....	1

Gujrat District — 7 entries:

Teachers	.....	4
Imam of Mosque	.....	1
Cloth printer	.....	1
Qanungo	.....	1

Shahpur District — 9 entries:

Maulavis and 'Ulama	.....	6
Blacksmiths	.....	2
Merchant	.....	1

Dera Ismail Khan District — 10 entries:

Maulavis	.....	4
Weaver	.....	1
Pathan (no occupation given)	.....	1
Labourer	.....	1
Kotwal	.....	1
Merchant	.....	1
Lambardar	.....	1

Peshawar District — 13 entries:

Doctor	.....	1
Mullas or Pirs	.....	3
Government Service Pensioners	.....	2
Bookseller	.....	1
Merchants or dealers	.....	5
Member of the Municipal Committee	.....	1

Hazara District — 33 entries:

Maulavis	.....	11
Jagirdars or Lambardars	.....	16
Government pensioners	.....	2
Deputy Postmaster	.....	1
Native Doctor	.....	1
Wakil	.....	1
Imam of Mosque	.....	1

Although the return did not adopt a uniform system of occupational classification, the following is an approximate percentage distribution of the different categories of the persons listed.

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF WHOLE</u>
Religious classes	100	21.9
Merchants and Shopkeepers	58	12.7
Cultivators	63	13.8
Government servant, revenue officials or government service Pensioners	34	7.4

Craftsmen & artisans	26	5.7
Teachers	24	5.2
Zamindars and Jagirdars	17	3.7
Labourers and Ikka-drivers	13	2.8
Professional (including Munshis)	9	1.9
Legal	2	.43
Occupations unspecified	42	9.2

The entries under cultivators and Zamindars and jagirdars are unsatisfactory as they give no indication of the size and importance of the holdings; in Hazara district, moreover, it is impossible to distinguish between those who were both jagirdars and lambardars and those who were only the one or the other. The total figure for cultivators probably gives an erroneous impression of the strength of the 'Wahhabi' allegiance among the cultivators of the Punjab; the entries under that heading are concentrated in a few rural districts such as Gurdaspur, Montgomery and above all Ferozepur.

In general, the Wahhabis appear to have drawn their support from the literate and 'respectable' lower middle-classes of pre-industrial society — the 'ulama, teachers, shopkeepers, skilled craftsmen, minor government servants and small or middling cultivators. In the Panjab 'Wahhabism' seems to have had little appeal for professional men or lawyers, large land-holders or for those with an English education.

### The Wahhabi Literature in India

In order to spread the Wahhabi ideology they used printing and lithographic press. Hunter says, "even the briefest epitome of the Wahhabi treatises in prose and verse on the duty to wage war against the English would fill a volume."<sup>1</sup>

1. Sirat-ul-Mustaqim, or the Straight Path, is the collection of sayings of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. It was originally written by Ismail Shahid, nephew of Shah Abdul Aziz. It was later on translated into Urdu by Maulvi Abdul Jabbar of Kanpur. According to Hunter it was regarded as the "Quran of the Wahhabis."
2. Mansab-i-Imamat, was written by Ismail Shahid. It deals with the nature of political leadership in Islam and rejects the idea of kingship. According to Hunter it was written to justify the Imamate of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.
3. Kasida, or Book of poetry by Maulvi Karam Ali of Kanpur discussing the obligation of waging war against the infidels and the reward of all who take part in it.
4. Sharh-i-Waqaya. It deals with jihad and its religious significance.
5. A poem by Maulvi Nimatullah, forecasting the downfall of the British power in India and the coming of a king from the west who shall deliver the Indian Muslims from the English. This qasida was prepared during this period and

circulated as an earlier prophecy in order to inspire confidence amongst the people.

6. Tarikh Kaiser Rum, or Misbah-us-Sare. It is a history of Abdul Wahab of Nejd, his persecution and wars against the Turkish apostates.
7. Asar Mahshar, or Signs of the Last Day, written by Maulvi Muhammad Ali in 1266 A.H., or 1849 A.D. This book was widely read during this period. It forecasts a war in the Khyber hills on the Punjab Frontier, where the English first will put an end to the Muslims. But the Muslims would find out this true Imam. A battle will ultimately take place for four days and the English will be completely wiped out, the very smell of Government being driven out of their heads and brains'. At last Imam Mahdi will appear at the scene. Besides, the following works:
  - I. Tazkir-ul-Akha'ir or Brotherly conversation by Ismail Shahid.
  - II. Nasihah-ul-Muslimin, or Advice to Muslims by Maulvi Karam Ali of Kanpur.
  - III. The Hidayat-ul-Muminin, or Guide to the Faithful by Ahmad Husain.
  - IV. An Arabic 'Tanwir-ul-Ainain, or Enlightening of the Eyes.
  - V. Tanbih-ul-Ghaflin, or Rebuke of the Negligent, in Urdu.
  - VI. Chihil Hadis or the Forty Traditions of Prophet Muhammad regarding Jihad or Holy War, also deal with the religious obligations of waging war against the 'infidels' and exhort the people to lay down their lives for this cause. Probably few movements in India have been propagated with greater system and zeal than the Wahhabi movement.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE MOVEMENT OF SAYYID AHMAD SHAHID — IDEALOGY, IMPACT AND AFTERMATH.

In the Muslim religio-political thought of the early decades of the 19th century, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid occupies a unique place. He was not merely a political thinker, he was an active political agitator and organizer also. He stirred the calm and placid surface of Muslim political life to its very depths and, though he did not succeed in realizing his objectives, he left a deep mark on contemporary politics and the ramifications of his movement could be seen in different parts of the country and in different forms of social and political activity.

Life 0 Sayyid Ahmad was born to Sayyid Mohammad 'Irfan's  
0 second wife Najah or Afiyah,<sup>1</sup> daughter of Sayyid Abu Said (d. 1779), a disciple of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, on Monday, November 29, 1786<sup>2</sup> at Rae Bareilly. He was the direct descendant, in the thirty-sixth degree, of Prophet Mohammad's son-in-law Hazrat Ali, the fourth Khalifa.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The name of Sayyid Ahmad's mother is differently given as Najah and Afiyah. Sayyid Mohammad 'Irfan's first wife, Naqiyah, daughter of Sayyid Mohammad Muin died early learning a female child. Cf. Mehr, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, 1, 51, 58.
  2. As regards his date of birth there is a difference of opinion. Muhammad Jafar Thanasari (Twarikh-i-Aliyah) second Edition, points out that he was born on 1st Muharram, p. 3.
  3. Nadvi, Sirat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid p. 45; Mehr Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, 1, 27.

Of the ancestors of Sayyid Ahmad, one Sayyid Rashiduddin migrated with his family from Medina and settled in Baghdad, where he died. His son, Sayyid Qutbuddin, immigrated to Ghazni. In 1210 A.D. Sayyid Qutbuddin with his relations and disciples came to India. Sultan Iltutmish (1210-1235) treated him with honour and reverence.<sup>1</sup> But Sayyid Qutbuddin did not stay in Delhi. He proceeded eastward and settled at Kara, near Allahabad.<sup>2</sup> Afterwards he was appointed as Shaikh-ul-Islam at Delhi.<sup>3</sup>

After six generations, Sayyid Qutbuddin II moved from Kara to Jais, near Rae Bareilly. His son, Sayyid Alauddin, lived in Jais. But Sayyid Alauddin's son, Sayyid Mahmud, got an appointment as the Qazi of Nasirabad about ten miles from Rae Bareilly, where he settled. After his death, his son Sayyid Ahmad succeeded as the Qazi at Nasirabad. But because of personal reasons he resigned his post and went to Rae Bareilly. Sayyid Shah Ilmullah (1623-1685), one of the great-grandfathers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid became a disciple of Shaikh Adam Binnauri (Ob. 1643 A.D.),<sup>4</sup> a prominent Khalifa of Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Sani Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi (1563-1624). Daulat Khan, a zamindar of Lohanipur,

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1. Nadvi, Sirat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, P.31; Cf. Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, B.I.S., p. 111.
  2. Cf. Mehr, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, 1,30,31.
  3. Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz-Shahi, B.I.S., pp. 348,349. Also see Nizami, Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century, pp. 139,164,173.
  4. Shah Waliullah, Anfas-ul-Arifin, p. 33.

Rae Bareli, gave to Shah Ilmullah ten bighas of land on the banks of the river Sai. The latter built a hut and a mosque on this piece of land and settled in Rae Bareli in 1640. It was here that Sayyid Ahmad was born and mostly spent the first forty years of his life.<sup>1</sup> His father Sayyid Mohammad Irfan died in 1800 A.D. when Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was of thirteen years of age.

As his father died in his early age, he had to face a number of hardships and saw much of the country through the eyes of a penniless wanderer, who did not always know where his next meal would come from and where he would sleep. Having a combination of innumerable qualities and possessing a highly attractive personality, he was really capable of leadership. He whole heartedly believed in a practical and ideal life and so he had acquired very little of traditional learning.<sup>2</sup> He, however, approached Shah Abdul Aziz of Delhi and got initiated into the Chishtiah, Qadiriah and Naqshbandiah orders. Later he appointed him as his Khalifa.

Since India had been declared Dar-ul-Harb or the 'Land of the Enemy' by Shah Abdul Aziz, he began to preach jihad to the common people. As a result every one who came into contact with him made up his mind to lay down his life at his order. In

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1. Cf. Mehr, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, 1, 35, 39.

2. Tarikh-i-Ahmadiyyah, Vol. I, p. 32 and Makhzan-i-Ahmadi, folio 16, which contains the most authentic information about his early life as its author, Muhammad Ali, was his nephew.

1821, he went to Mecca for Haj. It was during his tour to Arabia that he came under the influence of the Wahhabi ideology and came to know its impact on the vast mass of people. He brought this ideology with him as a political instrument for the restoration of Muslim supremacy. Just after his return from Mecca he began to give final shape to his reform movement, which came to an end on Friday the 6th May, 1831 when he was killed at Balakot with a large number of his followers, including Maulana Ismail who was the life and blood of his movement. At his death there were joyful ceremonies at the court of Ranjit Singh who, "ordered a Royal salute to be fired and the city of Amritsar to be illuminated in honour of the event."<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Ahmad aimed at the regeneration of Islam both in the religious and the political spheres. He had a religious approach both towards life and towards politics. His ardent faith in the unity of God and the supremacy of the Quran as the true guide of man inspires his letters and political statements. His thought and attitude towards life and politics confirmed that, "the essence of Tauhid as a working idea, is equality, solidarity and freedom. The State, from the Islamic stand point, is an endeavour to transform these principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in definite human organ-

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1. W.W.Hunter (1945 Calcutta) p. 53, also see Umdat-ul-Tawarikh (Ranjit Singh distributed thousand of rupees ~~of~~ to the poor and the needy and held royal feast), p. 341.

ization."<sup>1</sup> His thought was greatly affected by the teachings of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and more directly by Shah Wali Ullah. Besides, he had a burning love for India and earnestly believed in the freedom of the country. It was under the shadow of the catastrophe of 1857 that an entirely different colour was given to his movement. How interpolations were made in his letters to by the people after 1857 may be seen from the following passages where in place of the Britishers, the word Sikh has been substituted.<sup>2</sup>

<u>تاریخ عجیبہ میں منقولہ عبارت</u>	<u>اصل عبارت</u>
۱۔ سکھان نکوہیدہ خصال و مشرکین بد مآل بر اکثر اقطاع غریب ہندوستان از لب دریای اباسین تا د ار السلطنت دہلی تسلط یافتند (تاریخ عجیبہ ۸۹ - ۱۹۰)	۱۔ نصاری نکوہیدہ خصال و مشرکین بد مآل بر اکثر بلاد ہندوستان از لب دریای اباسین تا ساحل دریای شور کہ تخمیناً شش ماہ راہ باشد تسلط یافتند (مکاتیب شاہ اسماعیل)
۲۔ نہ با کسی از امرای مسلمین منازعت داریم انگیزی مخلصیت داریم ونہ هیچ راہ منازعت کہ از رعایای او هستیم وبہ حمایتش از مظالم ہر ایا - چنانچہ این معنی معلوم خاص و عام است (تاریخ عجیبہ ص ۱۴۵)	۲۔ نہ با کسی از امرای مسلمین منازعت داریم ونہ با یکی از روسای مومنین مخالفت - با کفار اقسام مقابلہ داریم نہ با مدعیان اسلام - با دراز مویان بلکہ سائر کفر جوہان مقاتلہ خواہیم - نہ با کلدہ گویان و اسلام جوہان چنانچہ این معنی معلوم خاص و عام است -

1. Iqbal - Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, 154.

2. Ghulam Rasul Mehr — Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, pp. 259-260.

۳- کفار فرنگی که برهندوستان تسلط یافته اند - نہایت  
تجربہ کار و ہوشیار اند و حیلہ باز و مکار -  
۴- آبادین قوم از جملہ نصاری و یہود یا مجوس و ہنود  
۴- بی شک آن قوم از جملہ مجوس یا سکھ یا ہنود اند کہ  
با ملت محمدیہ عداوت ہی دارند -  
(۱۹۲) (ایضاً ص ۲۱۲)

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was neither a philosopher nor a politician for he made no discourses, but was definite in outlook and practical in thought and action. Though he refrained from giving any political theory or doctrine, he is counted among the great political figures of the 19th century. His active and bold participation in the jihad movement gave a political complexion to his personality. He spent major portion of his life in active service. Irrespective of political differences and prejudices, he made himself all those people acquainted with all sorts of problems, conditions and met who in his opinion could give him the slightest help in his mission of reform and re-orientation of Muslim Society.

He did not aim at restoring the Mughal Empire, or the establishment of another state under his sovereignty. He wanted ensure the establishment of Islamic Kingdom and to redress the wrongs done to the Muslims by the Sikhs and the British. That he was contemplating the political system exactly resembling the Khilafat-i-Rashida both in spirit and detail shows the unreal and out-of-context character of his movement and his approach.

To understand the real significance and importance of his mission for which he was, finally to lay down his life on the battle field of Balakot, we must keep in view all previous Muslim

political upheavals and the difficult situation then prevailing in the country. The collapse of religious and political authority of the Muslims had confirmed his mission and led added greater enthusiasm to it. Muslims were so disturbed and all sorts of evils had crept into the society and no one knew where Muslim, Society was going.

The distinguishing feature of Sayyid Ahmad's movement was his emphasis on the practical struggle for jihad. He used all his knowledge and spiritual quality to convince the people of the urgency of waging war for the establishment of an Islamic State. In a letter he Nawab Sulaiman Jah he says, "During the last few years fate has been so kind to the accursed Christians and the mischievous polytheists that they have started oppressing people. Atheistic and polytheistic practices are being openly practised while the Islamic observances have disappeared. This unhappy state of affairs fills my heart with sorrow and I am anxious to perform hijrat. My heart is filled with shame at this religious degradation and my head contains but one thought i.e. how to organize jihad."<sup>1</sup>

Since India had been declared as the land of the enemy it became obligatory either to organize jihad or to migrate permanently from it. He did not appreciate the idea of withdrawing permanently but advanced the idea of jihad and refuted all those arguments which prevented him from this course of

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1. Quoted by Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadvi, p. 110.

action. He never thought of shedding Muslim blood in order to gain power again for the corrupt Muslim rulers but had an Islamic State in his mind as an ideal to strive for. He was not in favour of kingship and its history had convinced him not to have faith in it.

In history we find that the early reformers and statemen who wished the continuance of Islamic traditions only appealed to the intellectuals and tried to have the cooperation, of rulers and powerful political personalities and ignored the masses. But in the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid like J.S.Mill, there was due place for the masses as well as for the individual and fully realized the importance of popular support for the establishment of an effective Islamic State which gives due importance and place to the opinions and wishes of the common man. In this approach he was no less than Rousseau who formulated his theory of General will as his guiding conception. In his opinion like Rousseau and Bentham, the Government which did not carry the support of the majority was not worth keeping and the people should immediately get rid of it. It was only this love and affection for the common man which distinguished him as the first popular political guide in the country.

The indiscipline among the Mujahidins at Akora and Hazro- led to a meeting on 11th January 1827 of chiefs, scholars and important Mujahidins who decided to choose Sayyid Ahmad Shahid as their Imam and requested him to assume full authority necess-



ary for the success of the mission. He came to be known as "Sayyid Badshah" and the Sikhs called him by the name of "Khalifa." His imamat did not in any way interfere with the authority of the local chiefs and principalities, it only created a supreme authority for the successful prosecution of jihad. In the constitutional terminology it may be called a loose confederacy. His name was now included in the Khutbah of Friday. Some of the writers refer that even coins were minted in his name<sup>1</sup> but there is no reliable historical evidence to prove it.

The imamat made the movement of jihad more powerful and within a short period of two months there assembled 80,000 men for the execution of jihad struggle. Most important of them were Yar Muhammad Khan and the Sadars of Peshawar. They provided a lashkar of 20,000 brave men with light pieces of canons.

The taking over of Peshawar after so much strife and strain, helped in establishing the outstanding political status of Sayyid Ahmad and became the most important political personality throughout the region and was regarded as possessing the best political mind and practical ability. His followers travelled to every nook and corner of the country and recruited people. Hunter's book reveals the actual position of his organization. In his words the whole of the northern India from

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1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 621. First it appeared in Princep's "History of the Sikhs", 1824.

the remotest corner of East Bengal to the northern most hills of the Frontier, almost every town had a secret organization centered round the local mosque and guided by a band of noble spirits. The recruits went to and from on the long road covering more than a thousand miles getting all necessary amenities and instructions on the way. From the central headquarters at Patna preachers would go to every place in India carrying the message of reform and jihad. They were very particular about their conduct and were excellent in their dealings. The people who were regarded the backbone of the jihad were all men of scholarship and learning and had definite political aims.

The movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid though religious in nature was in conformity with the existing circumstances of the country. For nearly half a century the energy of the people in Northern India was utilized under his leadership to regain lost power. It can never be denied that his presence led to the production of men of outstanding political insight and ripe political wisdom.

A special code for the successful conduct of diplomatic affairs is a modern phenomenon. But if we go back to Sayyid Ahmad we are astonished to see that he had already discovered a code for the easy conduct of his political affairs. No one could understand these letters except the few chosen persons.

He made a remarkable selection of his companions. All were of a very strong character. Ghulam Rasul Mehr relates

that during their stay Mullah Kalim heard from some of the women of the village saying that either the companions of Sayyid Ahmad were saints or they had been deprived of sexual desires. They never had a look on the women. It was all due to the training of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid achieved considerable success in his movement. He challenged the British who had created a situation which has been thus described in a Calcutta Persian paper (Durbin, July, 1869) : "All sorts of employment, great and small, are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammadans, and bestowed on men of other races, particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye, yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Mohammadans in its Gazettes for exclusion from official post. Recently when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sundar bans Commission that official, in advertising them in the Government Gazette stated that the appointment would be given to none but Hindus."<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Ahmad had a remarkable ability to influence the audience by his inspiring speeches. These speeches were collected by Shah Muhammad Ismail and Abdul Hai under the title "Sirat-i-Mustaqim". As Sayyid Ahmad had studied thoroughly

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1. Durbin, of 14th July 1869, Quoted by Hunter - Indian Musalmans, p. 176, Second Ed. London, 1872.

the Indian political scene from different angles and with special reference to the conditions of the Muslims of India during the first half of 19th century, he could not only diagnose the disease, but also suggested the cure.

Physical Training 0  
0.

Sayyid Ahmad believed that the state did not only require intellectuals but also physically fit and mentally alert people. Therefore his movement of jihad required most physically fit and sound man. He himself learnt swimming, wrestling, shooting and archery. As a result, he developed a robust physique and possessed great physical strength.<sup>1</sup> Here he resembles Plato who gave a special place to gymnastic in his scheme of education. He was very fond of playing games particularly the games of bravery and military exercises. He used to divide his men into groups which fought mock battles. In this way he received military and physical training for his future struggle. He often used to carry weapons with him so that others also might realize its importance. He also advised others for the same. He thought that there was nothing better than jihad, actual physical struggle for a cause.<sup>2</sup> In his letters to Sardar Budh Singh, Sardar Sultan Muhammad Khan and

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1. Tawrikh-i-Aliyah, p.4, Nadvi, Sirat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, pp. 46, 48, 49 Mehr, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, 1, 59, 60.

2. Tarikh-i-Ahmadiya.

Sardar Said Muhammad Khan he says that he had accepted the leadership of the Muslims for the sole reason of organizing jihad as directed by Islam.<sup>1</sup>

The Aims & Objectives of Jihad.      In his correspondence with  
different leaders he had clearly  
and frankly expressed his views about jihad and had enumerated  
some of the causes which forced him to declare jihad. In one  
of his letters to Raja Hindu Rao, the then Wazir of Gwalior  
he wrote:

"You know that foreigners who were simply merchants have now become the masters of the country. The authority and honour of many great people had been reduced to dust by them. Those who were the masters of the Government and politics are now sitting idle. Therefore some saintly people have stood for something and only for the sake of God have left their wives and homes. These are the humble servants of God. They never wished to have world and honour. We only want to serve God, wealth and goods are no more useful for us."<sup>2</sup>

This shows that he was actualy the first fighter for Indian independence and, by throwing the English from the country,<sup>3</sup>  
wanted to establish a pure national government in which there was to be no conflict with the ruler's religion and ideology.

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1. Letters quoted by Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadvi.
  2. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Sirat-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, pp.357-358. Part I, Lahore.
  3. Some writers have tried to prove that his attitude was Pro-British but it was never so such a view is disproved by concrete historical evidence provided by his letters. Sir Syed's opinion that the Wahhabi movement was directed only towards Sikhs and not against the British, is no more tenable. There is sufficient authentic material to prove that the movement was first against the Sikhs and later on against the British. The statement of Ismail Shahid which Sir Syed has quoted in support of his argument is not corroborated from other soueces and is, in fact, contradicted by the letter of Sayyid Ahmad.

In one of his letters to Raja Hindu Rao, he says :

"When the country will be freed by the English our objective will be fulfilled. The ranks of the government will be given to those who wish and deserve. We only request the people of the State to serve Islam with their heart and soul and should continue to work in their place in their respective states."<sup>1</sup>

It means that Sayyid Ahmad realized the danger to the country from the rapidly growing power of East India Company and therefore he always required the cooperation and help of both the Muslims and non-Muslim leaders to face the common enemy. It was due to his anti-British attitude that he left the camp of Amir Khan as soon as the latter decided to enter into a treaty with the British.

Choice of a strategic  
Frontier.

It was the urge of his political  
maturity and practical experience

that this struggle should begin from the northern frontier where the powerful Afghan tribes could help such a movement and where there was a continuous range of Muslim rulers upto Turkistan. It was due to his political insight that he did not make India the centre of his political activities. Here he would have been forced to face hostile powers from every side and it would have been practically difficult to face the Sikhs. In choosing the frontier as the centre of his activity

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1. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Sirat-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Lahore. p.359 Hindu Rao was a Wazir of Maharaja Daulat Rai Sindhia.

he must have also considered the martial status and bravery of the Afghans. Even in his native town Rai Bareli there was a locality of Pathans and he had already experience of their bravery and courage. Most of them were personally known to Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and they promised to help in his struggle. Once in his speech at Panjtar,<sup>1</sup> he referred about the choice of the frontier in these words, "In India I could not find a suitable place to begin my movement for jihad though most of the people promised to help in several ways."<sup>2</sup>

Actual Struggle. 0  
0

Hunter says : "The Rebel camp on the Punjab Frontier owes its origin to Sayyid Ahmad, one of those bold spirits whom our extermination of the Pindari Power scattered over India half a century."<sup>3</sup>

Sayyid Ahmad having spent two years at home went to Malva and became the spectator of Amir Khan Pindari's activities. He joined the cavalry as a sawar in his army and lived there for seven years. He displayed his qualities of bravery in several battles and was soon promoted to the rank of Amir Khan's body guard. As he was always a source of inspiration, Amir

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1. On the frontier of Swat, near the district of Mardan, there was a locality of Pathans and it was for several years the centre of Sayyid Ahmad.
  2. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Sirat-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Part I, p. 379 Lahore.
  3. W.W.Hunter - Indian Musalmans p. 11. Amir Khan Pindari, afterwards, Nawab of Tonk.

Khan made him his chief adviser on all important political and military matters. W.W.Hunter, on account of prejudice, speaks of him as "a horse soldier in the service of a celebrated free-booter (Amir Khan) and for many years harried the rich opium growing villages of Malwa."<sup>1</sup>

In 1817 when Sayyid Ahmad came to know the intention of Amir Khan to enter into a treaty with the British, he left his camp and came to Delhi. He felt that jihad could only achieve the desired objective through popular support and understanding. And now he started touring throughout the country and in a very little period changed the land between Delhi and Calcutta into a rebellion camp.

Once he happened to be in Rampur and it was there that he was told about the miserable condition of the Muslims/<sup>in</sup> the Punjab. It was there that he made a plan<sup>2</sup> to save the Muslims in the Punjab and after that to wipe out the British from India. With the timely help of his two able lieutenants, Shah Ismail Shahid and Maulvi Abdul Hai, he organized such an effective reform movement that it soon took the shape of country - wide mass movement. Thousands of people performed haji and joined his movement.

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1. W.W.Hunter - Indian Musalmans, p.4, Second Edition (London) 1872.

2. M. Ikram - Mauj-i-Kausar, p. 16.



As he was fighting Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, he also received the indirect help and support of the British who wanted the annihilation of Ranjit Singh's authority. The British did not object to the collection of funds and recruitment for jihad. Particularly the decree against a merchant who had embezzled funds is a sufficient proof of such an attitude.<sup>1</sup> This attitude only continued so long as the Mujahidin were fighting the Sikhs, and as soon as they started anti-British propaganda, they also became the target of British opposition and criticism.

Within two years of his return from Mecca he completed all necessary preparations for jihad. On 16th January, 1826 he said good bye to his home for ever. At this time he was a man of extraordinary courage and political ability. In the beginning his companions were limited nearly to five or six hundred men. They marched towards north-Western region and covered thousand of miles.

First they passed through Gwalior where specially Hindu Rao, the brother-in-law of the Maharaja, received them with

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1. "A Hindu Banker of Delhi, entrusted with money for the Wahhabi cause on the frontier (that is to say Handi or bills of exchange), embezzled the same, and a suit was brought against him before Mr. William Fraser, late commissioner of Delhi. The suit was decided in favour of the plaintiff, Moulvi Ishak (Shah Mohammad Ishaq), and the money paid in my the defendant was forwarded to the frontier by other means. The case was afterwards appealed to the Sudder Court at Allahabad, but the decision of the Lower Court was upheld." Review of Dr. Hunter's Indian Mussalmans, p. 16.

great civility. Next to Gwalior, was Tonk, where he was already known to the founder of Tonk, Amir Khan. He provided Sayyid Ahmad with some funds and equipment. Then he proceeded towards Ajmer. From here Maulvi Abdul Hai was specially sent to Delhi for funds and from there he appeared at the scene of the jihad via Panipat, Karnal, Thanesar, Nandot, Bahawalpur, Marwar, Sind, Baluchistan and Afghanistan.

Upto this time Sindh had not been annexed by the British and its rulers were Mirs who had differences with Jodhpur and were afraid of British plans. Therefore, Sayyid Ahmad's mission was suspected by the officials of Amar Kot and Mirpur as a mission either from Jodhpur or the British.

But in Hyderabad he was given due attention and the whole party was entertained by the Mirs of Hyderabad, but failed to receive substantial help from them. From here Sayyid Ahmad went to see Bahawal Khan, the then ruler of Bahawalpur but like other Mirs of Hyderabad he refused to associate with Sayyid Ahmad.

The next place of his visit was Pirkot which was the head quarter of Sayyid Sibghat Ullah Shah, the founder of Hur movement. He came under his influence and greatly helped in advancing the cause of jihad in Sind.

Next to Pir Kot they went to Shikarpur and passed through Jagan, Khangarh and Dhag to Dhadar which is situated

at the foot of the Bolan pass, and to pass through it was really a difficult task. In Quetta they were respected but due to the support of the chief of Baluchistan, Mihrab Khan's help was not forthcoming.

Having completed the tours of these places, Sayyid Ahmad proceeded to Afghanistan, Qandhar, Ghaznin and Kabul, and established his head quarters at Naushera. At Qandhar he recruited 270 people and gave them an organization under the supervision of Din Muhammad of Qandhar,

During his stay in Afghanistan he came to know the differences among the Afghans and these differences were exploited to bring them under the control of the Sikhs. Both Qandhar and Baluchistan were on the brink of war. The Ghilzais who were the former rulers of Afghanistan had a conflict with the Durranis. Sayyid Ahmad offered his good officers but failed to reconcile their differences. Fully prepared to face the strong power of the Sikhs in Punjab, he marched, on November 1826, towards Peshawar and in December 1826 made Naushera his military headquarter. "In 1824 made his appearance among the wild mountaineers of the Peshawar Frontier preaching a holy War against the rich Sikh towns. of the Punjab."<sup>1</sup>

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1. W.W.Hunter - Indian Musalmans p. 13, Second Edition (London) 1872.

Keeping in view the basic principles of Shariat, he addressed an ultimatum of war to Ranjit Singh with certain conditions. He told them that, "the whole of Afghanistan and India were with the mujahidin to whom martyrdom was dearer than wine to the Sikhs,"<sup>1</sup> Ranjit Singh took no notice of this ultimatum. Instead of an answer, he sent a military force under the leadership of Budh Singh.

Battle of Akora. ¶

Sayyid Ahmad and his mujahidin were equipped with knives, swords, daggers, pistols and guns. He prepared a list of those who were physically fit and directed them to have good weapons.<sup>2</sup> After evening prayer Allah Baksh Khan was called on to teach important tactics of war and was appointed as the commander of the forces. The Sikh forces were under the command of Budh Singh, a cousin of Ranjit Singh. The troops which were seven to ten thousand in number, gathered at Akora, sixteen miles away from Naushera. Sayyid Ahmad's forces consisted of three categories namely Hindustanis, the Qandharis and a group of people from the neighbouring localities. In the first encounter many Sikhs were killed.<sup>3</sup> The loss suffered by the Mujahidin was of 36 Hindustani and 46 Qandhari lives. The first man who died in this battle was Shaikh Baqar Ali, (Dec. 21, 1824).

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1. Sawanaih-Ahmadi, p. 126.

2. Letters of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid (MS.).

3. Nearly 700 were killed.

This encounter gave Mujahidin strength and vigour and served as an eye-opener to the court of Lahore. Budh Singh being disappointed withdrew from Akora. People could at least hope that Sayyid Ahmad would liberate them from Sikh domination. A large number of Pathan Chiefs associated with the struggle. Among them were Khadi Khan of Hund, Ashraf Khan of Zaida and Fathai Khan of Punjtar. On the request of Khadi Khan, Sayyid Ahmad made Hund his head quarter.

Fighting at Hazro. 0

Next fighting took place at Hazro the commercial centre of the Sikhs, in the district of Campbellpur. The main purpose was to destroy the commercial centre of the Sikhs. Khadi Khan made a request to collect all looted property so that it might be distributed according to the wishes of Sayyid Ahmad but discipline was lacking in the ranks of the Mujahhidin. Some responsible persons of the locality decided to appoint an Imam so that there might be greater discipline. The choice fell on Sayyid Ahmad. People performed bait of Imam and Khilafat with Sayyid Ahmad. Sardar Yar Muhammad Khan, the then ruler of Peshawar, and Sardar Pir Muhammad Khan accepted his Khilafat through a letter sent to him. The news of his Imam and spread like any thing in the country.

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Now they decided to besiege and attack the fort at Attock, which was, strategically very important and if the Sikhs were removed from there, it would have become easy to attack Punjab and overthrow the Sikh power but the news was secretly conveyed by Khadi Khan and it could not succeed. Under the command of Budh Singh the Sikh force reached the West of the Indus at Seedo near Akora. During this period Lahore court had compromised with the Sardars of Peshawar. In the morning Sayyid Ahmad was poisoned by the servants of Yar Muhammad Khan.<sup>1</sup> In spite of his critical condition, he went with the mujahidin to the front. On March 1827 they fought with great zeal, and the superior Sikh military force could do nothing to prevent them from proceeding further. Yar Muhammad Khan who was following the suit of Sayyid Ahmad, decided to desert the movement by joining hands with General Ventura, Raja Sher Singh and General Budh Singh. The struggle which was making satisfactory progress now reached critical stage. Nearly six thousand Muslims were killed. Yar Muhammad Khan was rewarded for his act of treachery and his son was taken as hostage. The Muslims nicknamed him 'Yaru Singh'.<sup>2</sup>

At this time the condition of mujahidin was very critical, partly due to cold weather and partly due to lack of food

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1. The people, who poisoned him were brought in force him, but excused Alfurquan, 1955, p. 49.
  2. Charles Masson, "Baluchistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab," Vol. I, p. 14.

stuff. They either starved or had the leaves of the trees. But still they continued to face the enemy with confidence and determination. Seeing this condition of the Mujahidin Ranjit Singh sent a diplomatic mission consisting of Hakim Aziz Uddin and Sardar Wazir Singh to negotiate compromise. One of the conditions was that Sayyid Ahmad should not proceed further and stop where he was. The official answer was sent by Sayyid Ahmad through Maulvi Khair Uddin Shair Koti and Haji Bahadur Khan. First they met General Ventura, he used his diplomatic cleverness and told him, "when my camp was there in Hazro, I received an ambassador from Sayyid Ahmad who told me if Ranjit Singh would receive the State revenue of Yusuf Zai through Sayyid Ahmad, the military would flourish and would be saved of unnecessary expenses. So I appreciate the idea."<sup>1</sup> In this way he thought that he would take the most difficult task of collecting revenue and opposition would automatically come to an end. Since Mujahidins were not after worldly things, denied it and Maulvi Khairuddin said, "It was all wrong and false, he had nothing to do with it."<sup>2</sup>

Undue faith in the sincerity of the Sardars of Peshawar weakened the organization. Further attack was not possible unless the cooperation of the Sardars was available, but due

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1. Sawana-i-Ahmadi, p. 119.

2. Muhammad Ikram - Mauj-i-Kausar, p. 24.

to social evils their help was no more available. Another most disappointing problem was the opposition within the Muslims. Sayyid Ahmad paid a visit to Yusuf Zai, including Chamla, Dunair and Swat, and after due deliberations and thinking he made his headquarter in Khar. He made an appeal for their unity to put an end to Sikh rule. He also met with Panjtar tribes (Afridis, Mahmands & Khabils), extended them an invitation to participate in the jihad movement. Sulaiman Shah, the ruler of Chitral gave him all possible help and also wished to join with him in person.

But since the Durrani were constant source of trouble another encounter with the Sikhs was difficult. Yar Muhammad Khan left no stone unturned in creating difficulties for Sayyid Ahmad and his untimely opposition greatly affected the cause of jihad. Still Sayyid Ahmad prevented a war against Yar Muhammad as he had not come to fight against the Muslim brethren. His principal aim was the emancipation of the Muslims in the North-West and the Punjab from the Sikh domination. But to his surprise when he found Yar Muhammad Khan at Utmanzai to attack the mujahidin, he was forced to attack his lashkar and the fighting continued all day long (1828). Another plan was made to conquer Attock due to its strategic importance. But the news of this confidential plan was communicated to the Sikh Commander and nothing could be done.



At Panjtar the Sikhs took the initiative. As the mountaneous region was advantageous to the mujahidin they could use many tactics. Though the force was comparatively lesser, he organized in such a way that Ventura thought that they were much more in numbers, and thus he withdrew from the field. Though the success achieved was small, it gave the greatest blow to the military leadership of Ventura. Just after it, Sayyid Ahmad said his attention towards Khadi Khan who was secretly in alliance with the Sikhs and it led to the battle of Hund which ended in the death of Khadi Khan in 1829.

The death of Khadi Khan at the hands of Sayyid Ahmad brought Yar Muhammad Khan against him afresh. He received the full cooperation of Khadi Khan's relations. Though Ashraf Khan of Zaida had associated himself with the struggle of Sayyid Ahmad but his elder son, Muqarrab Khan who was related to Khadi Khan, thought to avenge his death. He cooperated with Yar Muhammad Khan, an ultimatum was forwarded to Sayyid Ahmad requiring the immediate vacation of Zaida. The fighting took place between the Mujahidin and the combined forces of Yar Muhammad Khan. Yar Muhammad Khan had to leave the field. Nearly three hundred of his supporters were killed, the mujahidin took possession of horses, guns, swords and a number of cannons.

By this time, "The Prophet's influence had now spread as far as Kashmir, and troops from every discontented prince of Northern India flocked to his camp."<sup>1</sup> He now went to Hazara and

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1. W.W.Hunter - The Indian Musalmans, second Edition (London) 1872, p. 16.

Kashmir. At Ashra and Amb, Painda Khan was defeated. When these places were conquered the battle took place with the Sikhs at Phulra. The Sikhs made use of "Hit and Run" tactics. In this battle the Mujahidin suffered considerably. Sayyid Ahmad Ali, the Sayyid's nephew and Mir Faiz Ali of Gorakhpur lost their lives.

On the other hand Ranjit Singh organized his forces under the brilliant leadership of Sher Singh, Ventura and Allard. Negotiations through Wazir Singh and Faqir Azizuddin prove an utter failure as the differences were so vital which could hardly be patched:

Sultan Muhammad Khan, encouraged by some of his relatives, prepared himself to avenge his brother's death. The battle of Toru took place and the Durrani's suffered heavily. The Mujahidin took over Peshawar in 1830 but he did not remove Sultan Muhammad Khan and was appointed Governor of the city. It was mostly due to the fact that Sultan Muhammad had apologized through Arbab Faiz Ullah Khan for all his acts and promised to practice the Islamic principles in Peshawar. Most of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad were against this act, as they rightly doubted the sincerity of Sultan Muhammad. Maulana Mazhar Ali of Azimabadi took over the post of gazi in Peshawar and other people were also given some ranks. Wine was prohibited, prostitution was abolished. Sayyid Ahmad himself went to Panjtar. But soon after the establishment of Islamic rule in Peshawar

the Mujahidin were faced with the problem of insincerity of Sultan Muhammad who had not yet forgotten to take revenge of his brother. The Mujahidin did one mistake that they at once tried to enforce the Islamic law with strictness, with the result that they soon became unpopular among the masses. For the accomplishment of this task they must have proceeded gradually. Sultan Muhammad Khan took the full advantage of the situation and made out a programme to kill Sayyid Mazhar Ali and all the collectors of tithes. The ruthless massacre took place in a single night. It was well planned and could succeed hundred percent. Such mass killing of Mujahidins led to organized jihad afresh. He left Peshawar and fixed his attention against the Sikhs in Hazara and Kashmir.

In 1830 Sayyid Ahmad established his headquarter at Hazara. A large number of mujahidin with the cooperation of the common men fought against the Sikhs at Bhogarmang and Muzzaffarabad during this period. As during the spring season Rajduwari was not suitable from the strategical point of view, he chose Balakot, because of its proximity to the Kaghan valley and Kashmir. It was the place where the last but memorable battle was fought on the 6th of May 1831, and he laid his life for the mission he stood for. Balakot is a little town in the subdivision of Manshra in the Hazara district. Situated on the Kaghan river it is surrounded by high mountains. It was only the strategical position which attracted Sayyid Ahmad's attention and it was inaccessible to the Sikhs, a miscalculation which proved very costly.<sup>1</sup>

1. Sayyid Ahmad considered Balakot impregnable is evident from the letter dated the 26th April, 1831, which he wrote to Nawab Wazir-ud-Daulah of Tonk, quoted by Abul 'Ali Nadvi in "Sirat-1-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid", pp. 225-26.

A certain element of mystery has surrounded Sayyid Ahmad Shahid's death.<sup>1</sup> Even after half a century his followers believed that he had not been killed but had disappeared and would again appear at a suitable time. Throughout of his life he had fought against the practice of tomb-worship, yet after his death his own tomb was likely to become an object of worship by his disciples. He had said that he would pray Allah to make his grave vanish. When questioned on the same subject by Maulvi Muhammad Yusuf Phulti and others he is said to have given a categorical reply to the effect that when he would die no one would be able to obtain his dead body and since the body would not be available, the question of erecting a tomb over it would not arise.<sup>2</sup> This controversy arose also because no one could see his dead body on the battle field. In this way several factors contributed towards creating a certain amount of uncertainty about the Sayyid's death.

Maulana Wilayat Ali, who later on became the leader of the movement greatly popularized the theory of his disappearance. He also wrote a pamphlet to propagate the idea. Yahya Ali of Patna/<sup>who</sup> was tried in the Wahhabi Trial at Ambala in 1864 used to read in jail the following couplet of Dard.<sup>3</sup>

1. "Two of his Khalifas from Patna circulated the doctrine that Sayyid Ahmad was not dead, but was merely hiding with a view to reappearance at a suitable time." Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 621.
2. Waqai 'Ahmadi, quoted by Ghulam Rasul Mehr, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Vol. II, p. 441.
3. Muhammad Ja'far of Thanesar, Kala Pani. For an account of the life of Maulvi Yahya 'Ali see Maulvi Abdul Rahim's Al-Durar-al-Manthur fi Tarajim-i-Ahl-i-Sadiqpur, also known as Tazkirah-i-Sadiqa, 1927, p. 63.

اتنا پیغام درد کا کہنا      \* جب صبا کوئٹہ ہار میں گئے  
کون سی رات آپ آئیں گے      \* دن بہت انتظار میں گئے

Maulvi Muhammad Jafar Thanasari also believed in the same idea. But later on he himself accepted that he had actually died. He says, "with the passage of time the idea of his disappearance has lost ground and most people of the Punjab and Hindustan now regard martyrdom as the more likely."

After some time the theory of concealment became vague. Some people even tried to find out his grave. But Wade's despatch proves that the graves are not genuine. As a matter of fact all these controversies go to show that his movement had tremendously influenced the Muslim community and they were not prepared to see him dead and in order to continue the movement different theories were propagated by his followers.

Generals like Ventura and Budh Singh could not deter him but he met his failure at the hands of the Muslims themselves. If the Pathans of Peshawar had cooperated with him, his movement would have succeeded, at least to some extent. The fact that the Sikhs were better equipped cannot be ignored. Ranjit Singh had invited some generals from France and Italy who were experienced in using modern weapons of war. As regards Mujahidins who had come from different parts of the country they were not well equipped. Secondly the insincerity of the Pathans and inter-tribal differences of the Pathans were sufficient to make the movement an utter failure. Even the social atmosphere was not favourable and the rules regarding the marriage of girls

caused considerable discontent among the people. It was all due to the single fact that he misunderstood the psychology of the Pathans.

It can not be denied that the prevailing circumstances so greatly effected his life that he spent most of his time in a period of almost unbroken chain of war and he was widely remembered and respected for his honesty, integrity and courage. During the operations of wars and particularly in his last war with the Sikhs at Balakot, he was sure that only his death at this critical juncture could effect what his life had failed to accomplish and it was also the completion of that task which his guide and philosopher Shah Abdul Aziz because of his physical weakness and old age had left unfinished.

Though his death was a great blow to the movement, it continued with vigour and confidence and later on Sittana in ~~the Swat Valley was made the head quarter for the fulfilment~~ of ~~the~~ the aims and objectives laid down by Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.<sup>1</sup>

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1. "The Wahhabi movement thus became a constant source of trouble to the government of India, since a system was devised whereby funds were collected and men selected and trained to be sent first to the head quarters of the community at Patna, and thence to the frontier camp of Sittana, and thereafter employed in fighting against the non-Muslim rulers of India." Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, pp. 620-21.

## CHAPTER V

### SHAH MUHAMMAD ISMAIL SHAHID

Maulana Muhammad Ismail<sup>1</sup> was one of the most important lieutenants of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. He was born on 29th April 1779 in Phulat, District Muzaffarnagar.<sup>2</sup> He received his early education from his father, Abdul Ghanī. His father died on 12th April 1789, when Muhammad Ismail was only ten years old. He was then looked after by his uncle Shah Abdul Qadir. He completed his study of external sciences at the age of sixteen. It was the period of Akbar Shah II who was receiving a pension and was a virtual prisoner in the hands of the British. There was a general pessimism and inertia prevailing every where and the fall of the Muslim political power was taken as a fact which needed neither looking into nor any regret by anyone.

Belonging to one of the most venerated families of India, Maulana Muhammad Ismail opened his eyes at a time when disintegration of Muslim power was such a fact. The situation demanded a creative role and a creative leadership on the part of the Muslims. Maulana Ismail Shahid rose up to the need of the time and decided to dedicate his energy for the restoration of Muslim political power in India.

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1. His mother's name was Fatima.

2. Mirza Hairat - Hayat-i-Tayyiba, p.16 & Hayat-i-Wali, p.353.

Muhammad Ismail was a keen student of history. Besides, he had studied geography also. Both these things helped him considerably in the organization of his programmes. As a student he had concentrated his attention on a study of the map of India, specially of the Punjab, which was to be the scene of his future activities.

Muhammad Ismail had close contact with the poor people from the very early years of his life. He was a friend and companion of the neglected piece of humanity. While entering into public life, the first thing he felt was the necessity of developing military courage and bravery, for the situation revealed that only armed struggle could save the Muslim Society. Though he happened to be the member of an orthodox family, he developed a wide and progressive outlook. He learnt riding by an expert Rahim Bakhsh.<sup>1</sup> He used to say that no one under his guidance had learnt all tacts of ridding as he did. After it he learnt boxing from Mirza Rahmat, who had been the instructor of almost of all the princes in this art and was second to none in his accomplishments. Muhammad Ismail was also a good swimmer. He could stay continuously in the water for three days. Generally he used to go through Jammuna to Agra from Delhi and come back.<sup>2</sup> He was also a good marksman

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1. Who later on accompanied him to the frontier and was killed.

2. Mirza Hairat, Hayat-i-Tayyiba, p. 31.



and could very easily kill even a little bird on a dense tree. All these activities were being watched by his uncle Shah Abdul Aziz whose teachings and thought were influencing the entire Muslim intelligentsia of India at this time. At the age of twenty one he was a complete soldier who had undergone all hardships of life.

His visit to the Punjab

It was the most unfortunate period for the Muslims/<sup>of</sup> the Punjab who were living precarious life under Ranjit Singh. The Islamic rules and regulations were greatly dishonoured, and mosques<sup>1</sup> were destroyed and Muslims were forcibly prevented from offering prayers. During Ramzan, the Muslims were forcibly made to take food by the Sikhs. Maulana Muhammad Ismail could not tolerate all these things. As an ordinary man he could go every where and talk to people in the Punjab. Even Sikh children seeing a Muslim used to say "Swar-da-Baccha" "or Young one of bore". Ismail Shahid secretly visited the inns where he could see the helpless people who had lost their wives, children and property. These visits greatly helped him in forming a definite political plan for the Muslims and it may conveniently be regarded as his political tour. He collected all possible data for his political analysis of the situation. He could not

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1. In the mosques weapons of war were kept. Even today a mosque in Lahore where Shah Ismail had his headquarter for some time is known as "Barood Khanai-Wali-Masjid."

receive any help from Punjabis but he did hope for some help from Afghans and firmly decided to take revenge from the Sikhs for the wrongs done to his Muslim bretheren. During his two year's tour of the Punjab, he also prepared the plan and sketches of some of the important forts.

Maulana Ismail now thought of discussing his mission with Sayyid Ahmad Shahid who had by now left the camp of Amir Khan and had come to Delhi. He found in him a man of remarkable courage and sincerity of purpose and decided to launch a movement under his leadership. The Sayyid, on his part, found in Maulana Muhammad Ismail, a true and a devoted lieutenant ready to lay down his life at his beck and call. The burden of dealing with all difficult political affairs fell on his shoulders. He discharged his duties with great courage, tact and ability. In fact Sayyid Ahmad owed much to the organizing capacity and dedicated spirit of Maulana Ismail.

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Maulana Muhammad Ismail was a very gifted orator. In richness of simple reasoning, simplicity of style and dignity of diction, his speeches were difficult to surpass. Sayyid Ahmad specially sent Ismail Shahid with Abdul Hai on a country-wide tour to prepare ground for his movement. The tremendous impact of his speeches is clear from some of the observations made by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in his Asar-us-Sanadid.

Ismail Shahid was the true representative of the house of Shah Waliullah and Shah Abdul Aziz and he earnestly desired

to reform the religious revival and political ascendancy. The following lines of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad about Ismail Shahid deserve to be quoted as they give an idea of the greatness of the reformer :

"The principles of reform and regeneration of the community which Shah Waliullah could not propound publicly on account of the impatient and tyrannical attitude of the time, and which lay concealed in the ruins of old Delhi and the hospices and seminaries of Kotla, were now openly preached by the great reformer of the period - Ismail Shahid - in his public orations on the stairs of the Jama Masjid and he fired the imagination of the people with revolutionary zeal. The influence of his movement crossed the frontiers of India. What people hesitated to talk about even behind closed doors came to be discussed in public and in the streets."<sup>1</sup>

His Political Writings. 0

Apart from his religious writings, there is a pretty definite collection of his political writings. But his political ideas lie scattered in the speeches he delivered from time to time, the letters that he wrote to rulers and ulama

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1. Quoted by M. Ikram in, Mauj-i-Kausar, pp. 34-35.

and in his book 'Mansab-i-Imamat.' According to Hunter, this book was written in order to justify the Imamatus of Sayyid Ahmad. It is one of his excellent writings and consists of 114 pages. The importance and the worth of this book lies in the fact that in this treatise he has given a masterly analysis of the theory of political leadership in Islam. He has completely rejected kingship, as an un-Islamic institution. In this outright condemnation of the institution of monarchy he stands without an equal in the history of Islam since the rise of monarchy in Islam there has all along been an attempt to present monarchy as institution legalized by the exigencies of the time. Maulana Ismail looked back at the history of Islam without any prejudice and with a clear and unerring vision and found the whole institution of kingship a negation of the true spirit of Islam. He transfers suzerainty to Muslim people and in this respect he introduces a progressive element in Muslim political thought. He remarks:

"The politics of Islam and the politics of kings are as different as sweet and saltish waters, should the two be mixed it would obviously be the sweet water which would lose its taste."

All important letters addressed by Sayyid Ahmad to different Sardars, rulers and ulama were drafted by Ismail Shahid.

For the power and strength of his mission, for the inspiration of his teaching, and for its effect upon future generations and developments, Ismail Shahid stands out prominently as a great master of political thought. He uncovered vital

truths and foresaw important developments that were hidden from his contemporaries.

#### Actual Struggle. 0

For a long time Ismail Shahid worked side by side with Sayyid Ahmad. In fact he was the brain of the movement. In all the battles which were fought at the frontier, he played a major part. Many battles under his command were successful. After due preparations, on his advice, Sayyid Ahmad paid a secret visit to Thanesar to inform about his mission and toured Malir Kotla, Mamdoot, Bahawalpur, Hyderabad, Sind, Shikarpur, Jagain, Khan Garh, Dara Bolan, Qandahar, and Kabul, and all the informations given to him by Ismail Shahid proved correct in the long run.

He was the commander-in-chief of Mujahidin forces. Through Durrai Khaiber he reached Peshawar and from here via Yusufzai he reached Khuwaishgi, from where he could easily study the strength of the Sikhs. He spread a net of spies to collect information about the military strength of the Sikhs. At this stage he was greatly helped by his maps which he had drawn during his private visit to the Punjab. Sardar Muhammad Khan, the Younger brother of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, himself came to Khuwaishgi and offered his services to him.

At the first battle of Akora (Dec. 1826), Ismail Shahid directed all the forces and ultimately the battle was won due to his strategic planning.

Ismail Shahid was not in favour of attacking Hazro and consequently it proved a hopeless adventure. After this incident of indiscipline Ismail Shahid decided to prepare a ground for the Imam<sup>1</sup> of Sayyid Ahmad. Not only the Punjabi Maulvis but also the Indian ulama sent their views for appointing Sayyid Ahmad as the Imam.

The letter which Ismail Shahid addressed to Budh Singh is the best example of his political ability and experience. It runs as follows:

"From:-

The Commander of the faithful, Sayyid Ahmad Sahib, in reply to the letter of Sardar Budh Singh, the Chief of the armies of Maharaja Ranjit Singh."

In the name of God, the merciful and the clement. From the side of the leader of the faithfuls, it should not remain concealed to the heart, leavened with magnificence of the general of the troops and armies, the owner of the treasures and offices, comprisor of the dominion and the politics, comprehender of the grandeur and the government, skilled in the arts of sword and warfare, with a banner of magnitude, Sardar Budh Singh, may God lead him to the right path and cause to rain upon him the cloud of Divine guidance, that their letter full

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1. Ismail Shahid declared that if anyone challenged the Imam<sup>1</sup> of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid will be treated as traitor to Islam. Mirza Hayrat, p. 21.

of eloquence, comprising an expression of fortitude and ingenuity reached here. The statements mentioned in it became evident. It seems that they did not understand fully what we intend by these efforts and struggles that is why they have written the said letter.

"Now they should listen to it carefully and should understand the purpose of it with perfect attention that the differences with the government and the State is based on different reasons. Some of the people intend to acquire riches and power through it, others wish to make a show of their bravery while some desire only to acquire the rank of martyrdom, but we need some thing different, and that is only to obey the commands of my Lord, the real Master and the most worthy King, which is arrived in the matter of the help of Prophet Muhammad's religion.

God the magnificent and most exalted is a witness to the fact that no motive from among the sensual motives except the said objective, is in our minds in these Warfares. No other desire comes to our lips or arises in our heart.

"So in the defence of the religion of Prophet Muhammad I perform my every act in such a way which is useful for the same and if God the most exalted wished I will continue to remain busy in this very effort till the time of my death and will spend the whole of my life in it. So long as I am alive will continue to follow this path and will try to reach my desired destination. So long there are hands and feet, there is the

very path to travel and the same ambition to gain. Either I become an insolvent or a rich one, people accuse me of cowardice or name with ingenuity, I attain a noble status or the rank of a martyr but (whatever the result may be) if I think that the acquiescence of my Lord depends upon this very fact that I should come, in the arena, alone with my own life, I will certainly do so and for God's sake I will stand with my whole heart, in the foremost rank without flinching. I will enter into the congregations of the armies without any doubt and fear.

"In these words, I do not desire to make a show of my fortitude or to acquire riches and the evidence of this fact is that if any one of the great leaders and the high ranking chief accepts the religion of Prophet Muhammad, I will praise his manliness with all my heart and soul and will have good wishes for his state and dominion. Not only this but I will also do numerous efforts for the rapid development and progress of his state. If I do contrary to it, I will be blamed for that.

"If they think over it realistically, they will come to know that in this matter I am not to be accused or blamed at all, because when that magnificent chief (Budh Singh) cannot offer any excuse or apology in obeying the orders of his rulers though he (the ruler) is one of their persons rather one of their brothers, how is it possible to offer an excuse in obey-



ing the commands of the strongest while that Exalted one is not only the creator of all human being but the Creator of the entire Universe.

May peace be on those who follow the right path."<sup>1</sup>

Budh Singh, however, did not give any reply to his letter but started preparations/ for war. At this critical juncture Ismail Shahid warned Sayyid Ahmad not to try to obtain help of the natives, who had in previous incidents sufficiently proved their character. In this battle he fought with such a bravery that the Sikhs left even their canons on the field.

The battle in which General Ventura was commanding the Sikh forces is historically most important. Ventura had promised Ranjit Singh that he would bring Sayyid Ahmad and Ismail Shahid alive to the court. But to his surprise Ismail Shahid was victorious and thus his prestige was reduced to dust.

Ismail Shahid as an intelligent general was always alert even where there was complete peace and security and he made his principle not to sleep unarmed. He made Amb and Kashmir his head quarter and made the best use of his resources. It was this prudence and courage which saved the life of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid at Shaidu. At the battle of Shinkiari, he received

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1. Letter quoted by Mirza Hairat - in his Hayat-i-Tyviha, p. 166. This letter was in the Month of Jamadus Sani 1242 A.H./1826.

bullet several/wounds but he did not leave the ground till the battle had ended in his favour. At the battle of Zaida, with only seven hundred men, he gave crushing defeat to an army of nearly 10,000 Durrani. The battles of Amb and Ashra are examples of his military ability and organizing capacity.

#### The Conquest of Peshawar.

The continuous victory of the Mujahidin greatly impressed the Sardars of Peshawar. All the negotiations regarding compromise were conducted by him. With the approval of Ismail Shahid, Sayyid Ahmad marched towards Peshawar. The ruler himself surrendered and handed over Peshawar to him. In Peshawar orders were issued to stop the consumption of wine and opium and prostitution was abolished. But soon due to the insincerity of Sardars, Peshawar was lost. This loss was a great blow to the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and Ismail Shahid.

While Sayyid Ahmad and Muhammad Ismail were at Balakot, Ranjit Singh sent Sher Singh with 20,000 Sikh army to destroy them. The full strength of the Mujahidin was only 900. Shah Ismail rightly thought that it was the last battle and he fought with the zeal of a martyr. Both Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and Ismail Shahid died fighting at Balakot on May 1831. Those who could escape death went to Sittana and from there continued to trouble the British for a very long time. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who wrote his Asar-us-Sanadid in 1847, some 14 years after the tragedy of Balakot, says that till that time groups of volunteers used to visit Balakot and they kept the memory of Sayyid Ahmad and Ismail Shahid as green as ever.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FARAIZI MOVEMENT (1804 - 1860)

In Bengal the position of the Muslims from every point of view — religious, political and economic, was precarious. Due to the absence of suitable religious and secular education they had become utterly illiterate, superstitious and obscurantist. Even Hunter sensed this situation and observed a century ago (i.e. in the 18th Century) Muhammadanism seemed to be dying of inanition in Bengal."<sup>1</sup> This situation could only be realised after the Britishers had completely taken over the control of the country.

The people of Bengal greatly suffered at the hands of the foreign power due to their political and commercial monopoly. The land reform of 1793 destroyed their handicrafts and left Muslims economically crippled and physically exhausted. This was undoubtedly the most critical and unfortunate period of their history. The following lines from Hunter throw light on the miserable plight of the Muslims then living in Bengal. He says:

"I have seldom read anything more piteous than the private letters and newspaper articles of Bengal Musalmans. The Calcutta Persian paper (Durbin July 1869) sometimes ago wrote thus, "All sorts of employment great and small are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammadans, and bestowed on men of other races, particularly the Hindus.

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1. W.W.Hunter : England's work in India, p. 47.

The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye, yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Muhammadans in its Gazettes for exclusion from official post. Recently when several vacancies occurred in the office of Sundar bans Commissioners, that official, in advertising them in the Government Gazetted stated that the appointment would be given to none but Hindus."<sup>1</sup> Further he says, "A hundred and seventy years ago it was almost impossible for a well-born Musalmans in Bengal to become poor, at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich."<sup>2</sup>

It was under these circumstances that Shariat Ullah started his movement in Bengal and for several decades kept the British authorities in great suspense and anxiety. Shariat Ullah who became later on a great public figure in the public life of Bengal, rose to the occasion and laid the foundation of Faraizi movement in 1804. Not much is known about his early life. He was born of obscure parents in parganah Bandar Khola, district Farid-pur in 1764 A.D. At the age of nearly eighteen he went to Mecca. According to one information he studied with al-Shaikh Tahir as-Sanbal al-Makki and came back after a long period of twenty years.<sup>3</sup> His long stay in Mecca brought him under the influence of Wahhabis who were fighting against all innovations and deviations from early Islam. But there is lack of authoritative historical evidence to prove that he was really

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1. Calcutta Persian paper — Durbin, July 1869.

2. W.W.Hunter — The Indian Musalmans, p. 158, Second Edition (London) 1872.

3. Encyclopaedia of Islam, II, p. 47.

influenced by the Wahhabi ideology. As a matter of fact he was a student of such Meccan divines who did not like the Wahhabi ideology at all.

Shariat Ullah wanted the people to give up un-Islamic practices and to follow the original teachings of Islam as demanded by Prophet Muhammad. On his call they left all such practices and became the true follower of God's Commandments i.e. Faraizi. First of all he advised the people to repent for all their past sins and then to follow faraids of duties. They became very particular and strict about their religious duties (faraiz). James Taylor says that they were "stricter in their morals than their other Mohammadan brethren."<sup>1</sup> Consequently on this doctrine of 'Faraiz' developed largely, the movement which came to be called the "Faraizi Movement." To quote Taylor again, "They (the Faraizis) profess to adhere:

"To strict letter of Koran and reject all ceremonies that are not sanctioned by it.....the commemoration of the martyrdom of Hasan and Husain.....is only forbidden but even witnessing the ceremonies connected with it, is advised by them. They reject the rites of Puttee, Chuttee and chilla which are performed between the first and the fortieth day after the birth of a child and observe the rites of 'Aqiqah.....In the same way they have divested the marriage ceremony of its formalities.....The funeral obsequies are conducted with a corresponding degree of simplicity, offering of fruits and flowers at the grave are not raised above the surface of the ground nor marked by any building or brick or stone. The Faraizees have the character of being stricter in their morals than their Muhammadan brethren, but they are inclined to

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1. James Taylor : Topography, p. 248.

intolerance and persecution, and in showing their contempt of the religious opinions of their neighbours, they frequently occasion affrays and disturbances in their town."<sup>1</sup>

Haji Shariat Ullah came to Bengal in the beginning of the 19th century and gave birth to an agrarian movement with the help of down trodden Muslims peasants, workers, and artisans. In order to remove the inherent weakness, that is of inferiority complex from Muslim minds, he lived with them as one of them and soon became their guide and leader determined to bring them out from darkness to light. In addition to this he also gave up the title of Pir and Murid and preferred to be called ustad or teacher. He said that the relationship of pir and murid was responsible for undermining human personality and its development. He made them conscious of their own place in the society<sup>2</sup> and made them strict adherents of Farai<sup>3</sup> or duties. He began to work in 1802 and, "for several years Shariat Ullah quietly promulgated his newly framed doctrines in the villages of his native district, encountering much opposition and abuse, but attracting a band of devoted adherents, he by degrees acquired the reputation of a holy man,"<sup>4</sup> and his authority became unchallenged and nobody dared to ignore his wishes and orders.

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1. James Taylor, pp. 248-250.

2. Karamat Ali; Hujjat-i-Qawiah, p. 50.

3. Karamat Ali, Nasim-ul-Harmayn, I, 160.

4. Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 99.

Shariat Ullah mainly concentrated his energy in wiping out the capitalists both the Hindus and the British alike who were exploiting the economic resources of the country. And therefore, the movement could get unprecedented support from the uneducated peasantry, the weavers and several other Muslims of Decca, Farid-pur, Jessore and Bakarganj. Probably it was due to this that Shariat Ullah was sometimes called "Pir of the Julaha." James wise's<sup>1</sup> contention that he was a son of a weaver is quite wrong as he was the son of a Taluqdar.<sup>2</sup>

The Zamindars were very much afraid of this new agrarian movement which brought the Muslim peasantry together as one man. Soon, as is usual with great reformers and thinkers, differences arose and Shariat Ullah was forcibly removed from Nawabari, in the Decca district, where he had settled and was forced to return to his birth place. There he was regarded as the minister of faith and won the sympathies of uneducated class of the Muhammadans. He promulgated rules and regulations which were carried and obeyed without any excuse to the remotest corner of the country. He performed his task in his most difficult hours, with dignity, intelligence and due caution.

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1. James Wise : Eastern Bengal, p. 22.

2. J.E.Castrell : Jessore, Freedpur and Backergunge, p. 36, no . 151 in which he also admits that Haji possessed a small ancestral estate.

When India passed into the complete sovereignty of the foreigners a discussion arose whether India was still a Dar-ul-Islam. They consulted the outstanding authority, Shah Abdul Aziz of Delhi, who gave Fatwa and said that when infidels get hold of Muslim country and it becomes impossible for the Muslims living therein and in the neighbouring areas to drive the infidels away or to retain reasonable hope of ever doing so and the power of the infidel increases to such an extent that they can abolish or retain the laws of Islam at their pleasure and no one of the Muslims is strong enough to seize on the revenues of the country without the permission of the infidels and the Muslims no longer feel so secure as before — such a country is positively a Dar-ul-Harb, i.e. a country of the enemy. So was the condition in Bengal in the beginning of 19th century and consequently Shariat Ullah declared India Dar-ul-Harb or the land of the enemy and to be more practical prevented from offering Id or Friday prayer in the territory of Bengal. In the words of Hunter:

"The articles of faith which he (Shariat Ullah) chiefly insisted were the duty of the holy war (jihad), the sinfulness of infidelity (Kufr), or introducing rites and ceremonies into worship (Bidat), and of giving partnership to the one God (Shirk)."<sup>1</sup>

In 1867 while Maulana Karamat Ali was lecturing, it was suggested that in the light of Meccan fatwa an Imam should be

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1. W.W.Hunter, ed. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.IV, p.399.



appointed under the British regime. In reply to this he said to a police officer, if we appoint an Imam you would put handcuff on our hand."<sup>1</sup> It can be inferred from it that the Faraizi were afraid of the British and did not have the courage to discuss the status of India publicly. Therefore they did not come into direct conflict with them like that of Wahhabis, "whose zeal is greater than their knowledge deduce from the fact of India being technically a country of the enemy, the obligation to wage war upon its rulers."<sup>2</sup> The only fact that they prevented the congregational prayer, is sufficient to believe that they regarded India under the British rule as 'Dar-ul-Harb'.

Though Shariat Ullah declared India Dar-ul-Harb, he did not give birth to any revolutionary principle like that of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and did not take any direct action of against the British.<sup>3</sup> A critical study and analysis of the Faraizi movement will show that its followers did not only oppose Friday prayers, they were also deadly against the administrative changes brought about by the English whose policies and attitude was no more conducive to the health of the Muslim Society. And his declaration for not performing Jumah prayer<sup>4</sup> undoubtedly contains the germs of political regeneration of his countrymen.

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1. Maulvi Karamat Ali : Hujjat-i-Qati, p. 104f.

2. W.W.Hunter, ed. Indian Musalmans, pp. 142-43.

3. Karamat Ali, Hujjat-i-Qawalah, pp. 43-8, Nasim-ul-Harmayn, p. 165.

4. District Gazetteer Faridpur, p. 39.

For, the Faraidis think that in accordance with Hanafi law the congregational prayers are not permitted except in *misr al-jami* i.e., in such a township where the Amir (or administrator) and the Qazi (or the judge) are present; and the important point is that the Amir and Qazi must be appointed by a lawful Muslim Sultan. Thus, the *misr al-jami* is a constituted township in this special sense. The Faraidis, therefore, held that such constituted township did not exist in Bengal under the British rule.

Because of arousing a spirit of revolt against the cruel attitude of Hindu land lords and the British, his activities were strictly watched and for some time was kept under the ban of the police for exciting his disciples in the country to withhold the payment of revenue. "But he acted with great prudence and caution, namely assuming any other character than that of a religious reformer."<sup>1</sup>

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1. The controversy over the legality of congregational prayers in India was not a Faraidi innovation. It may be dated back to the period of Muslim Sultanate in Delhi. In A.D. 1344, a controversy revolved around the question, whether the congregational prayers could be lawfully held under an unrecognised Sultan, i.e. in the regime of Muhammad bin Tughlaq who did not obtain the recognition of the 'Abbasid Khalifa of Cairo at that time. The contemporary historians record that in the same year the question arose in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq about the legal position of the Sultan, and after a good deal of controversy 'Quthugh Khan, the Sultan's teacher convinced the monarch that no monarchy could be lawful without a recognition from the Khalifa. Then the Sultan himself began to believe firmly that organized social or religious life was not lawful without the Khalifa's consent, and ordered that the congregational prayers of Jumah and two 'Ids be kept in abeyance. These prayers were revived only after he received a decree from the Khalifa recognizing him as a lawful Sultan.

After the death of Shariat Ullah, Faraizi leadership passed into the hands of his son Muhammad Muhsin (1819-1860) or popularly known Dudhu Miyan, who considerably differed from his father in thought as well as in action. Born in 1819, he went to Mecca in his prime of life and began to preach the principles of his father as well as of his own newly framed doctrines. Though originally the movement was a religious one but Dudhu Miyan through his well thought socio-economic programme made it a political movement and was greatly supported by the oppressed majority of Eastern Bengal and Assam. He brought social, religious, economic and political problems to a forefront which were constantly troubling their minds and were hindering their progress due to the domination of the foreign power. He brought dynamism to the movement and it became somewhat aggressive as he openly adhered to reform socio-economic system of Bengal. His name became a household word throughout the districts of Faridpur, Pubna, Bakirgandi, Decca and Neakhali and his mighty voice in defence of peace and economic prosperity penetrated to every corner of India. He revitalized the whole programme and made Faraizi movement more effectively organized and again revived the pir system which was a marked

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(Continued from previous page)

I.H.Qureshi : Sultanate of Delhi, pp. 33-35; and "Facimile of the Memoir of Muhammad bin Tughlaq" in Agha Mahdi Husain's The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, London, 1938, p. 174.

deviation from the teachings of his father. One of the most remarkable achievements of his administrative ability was the establishment of an effective organization of the Society as he divided Eastern Bengal into circles and appointed a Khalifa to each and gave them power to collect funds for the progress of the movement so that it may become a force within their respective spheres. Soon he became the acknowledged leader with the timely support of peasants, workers, and crafts men, whose cause he advanced with heart and soul. His pure and simple preaching of equality was greatly responsible for winning the heart of the common man. Dudhu Miyan could show his indomitable courage when he took very stern action against the levying of illegal cesses by landlords and went a step further by declaring that all land belongs to All Mighty God and no one had a legitimate right to levy taxes upon it and continued to oppose it tooth and nail. This bold stand inevitably led to wide-spread discontentment among the landlords and indigo-planters who came with daggers drawn, as it posed a direct challenge to their influence and authority. It is said that not a chest of indigo reached England without being stained with human blood.<sup>1</sup> They advanced a warning to the tenants saying them not to join the movement, and if they did were greatly and mercilessly punished by them. He was falsely charged with abetting the plunder of several houses in 1841 and was also

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1. Nil Darpan by Din Bandhu Mitra, The Dawn Society, Magazine, Calcutta, July, 1905.

committed to the session on the charge of murder but was acquitted as there was lack of sufficient evidence to prove the same. In this way the landlords tried to give repeated blows to his towering personality but hopelessly failed as it had now become a mass movement and reached such a somentum that these false charges helped in strengthening the movement, as everybody found in his teachings a promise for a better future. And, "there efforts to implicate him in different legal cases totally failed to brow beat him."<sup>1</sup>

Apart from all these, when his popularity reached its highest peak he took the task of removing the differences himself and organized independent courts for the administration of justice and, "any one during to take cases to the British courts was dealt with by social penalties."<sup>2</sup> People were sent with his orders to distant villages and he signed his letters, 'Ahmad nam na malum' (Ahmad of unknown name), Every Hindu, Muslim, obeyed his orders which were carried to every village as they suited to the needs of the common man. The common people extended their full support to him both in men and material. He was well informed about every activity going on against him as he had spread a net of spies throughout the country. He successfully exploited the situation for the advantage of the

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1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, pp. 99 - 100.

2. Chaudri, Civil disturbances in India, p. 11.

movement and made repeated appeals to the Muslims to join it. This attitude resulted into direct clash between zamindars and Dudhu Miyan. After a considerable struggle, they took him to Alipur jail as a state prisoner.<sup>1</sup> And the revolt of 1857 brought him to Bahadurpur where he breathed his last on 24th September 1860 and was buried there.

Next to Dudhu Miyan in Bengal was an equally important reformer Maulvi Karamat Ali who died in 1873. He was inspired by the teachings of Shah Wali Ullah and his son Shah Abdul Aziz. But he differed from their political aims and objectives and denied that India was dar-ul-Harb and gave a great blow to the movement. He helped Maulvi Abdul Latif Khan, the then Secretary of the Muhammadan Literary Association of Calcutta, who tried to get rid of the political contorvercies of the day.

But the Faraizi movement severely suffered when Dudhu Miyan was taken as the State prisoner and the movement gradually faded from the political scene. However it cannot be denied that the movement was the direct reflection of social, religious, economic and political problems which exercised the minds of the Muslims of Bengal after the decay and disintegration of Muslim political authority. It was by and large the result of Wahhabi movement which tremendously influenced Indian Muslim political outlook. In 1834, the Faraizi movement became so wide

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1. JASBL XIII, p. 81-82.

spread that the Government appointed a special Committee to enquire into its activities. A letter written by the head of the Bengal police dated 1843 says:

"That a single one of their preachers had gathered together some eighty thousand followers who asserted complete equality among themselves, looked upon the cause of each as that of the whole sect, and considered nothing criminal if done in behalf of a brother in distress."<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be denied that like the Wahhabi movement it was inspired by a desire to resuscitate classical Islam through the reform of Muslim Society and the restoration of its political power.

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1. Letter, No. 1001, dated 13th May 1843, and N. 50 of 1847, from the commissioner of Police for Bengal.

## CHAPTER VII

### ON THE EVE OF 1857

The Britishers were now completely and politically speaking the masters of India. The Mughals, "were like Rhine land imperial knights trying to maintain ancient splendour on an income many times too small."<sup>1</sup> They could not maintain the honour, the dignity and the authority of Mughal Empire any more. They were mere tools in the hands of unscrupulous ministers.<sup>2</sup>

Due to lack of fore sight and discipline, power slipped from the hands of the Muslims. The efforts of Shah Waliullah, whose nature rebelled against the concentration of wealth in few hands and the foreign rule, and the victory of Ahmad Shah Abdali could not restore Muslim power and prestige. Even the fruits of victory at the battle field of Panipat were reaped by the victors of Plassey. The British considered compromise with the Muslims as dangerous because it could lead to revival of their political ambitions. They suppressed and ignored the Muslims more than the Hindus. A time came when every citizen of India was discontented and desperate on account of the British attempts at the extension of their sphere of political authority

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1. Percival Spear — Twilight of the Mughals, p. 61.

2. C.R.Wilson, Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol.II, Part I, p. iii.



by all means, fair or foul. The various policies — Doctrine of Lapse, Subsidiary Alliances etc. — were calculated to establish British hegemony in India. The struggle of 1857 constitute a mile stone in the political and economic history of India, as it marks the beginning of a collective efforts on the part of the Hindus and the Muslims to oust the British from India and get rid of foreign administration. All the miseries, oppression and disaffection caused by the policies of the British was revealed in the Mutiny of 1857. To quote Sir Dunbar,

"The greatest mass of 250,000,000 people of India living in the villages scattered over the country side were passive, as they had usually been in times of disturbance. But it was otherwise with the upper classes. In British India, as it expanded, they had lost their power and influence altogether and in many cases their livelihood. In industry the once world famous textile trade had been extinguished. In addition to this sense of frustration there was a wider feeling of alarm and anxiety in the view-taken of the rapid growth of Westernisation under Dal housie. The apparent miracle of the 'fire carriage', the rail service which Dal housie introduced, threatened pollution to the caste Hindu who of the new wine of the west, however, sound in

itself, into the old bottles of the East, was looked upon with acute suspicion and resentment."<sup>1</sup>

Dalhousie's attitude towards annexation and the Doctrine of Lapse caused discontentment and distrust throughout India. Its policy of aggrandizement rendered all native powers completely desperate and disgusted. They interfered in the day to day affairs of Hindu and the Muslims and it was widely thought that Lord Canning had been appointed to convert India to Christianity.

The Mutiny of 1857 was a country-wide struggle to throw away the British completely from the Indian soil. It was not simply a sepoy mutiny due to catridge, but was an spontaneous over flow of powerful feelings and revolt against the religious, social, military and political policies of the British. It is significant that even those powers which were opposed to the Mughal Emperor — the Marathas, for instance — gathered round the Mughal Emperor in order to organize a movement against the British occupation of the country. Every community except the Sikhs and the Parsis, actively participated in it. The participation of the Rani Lakshmi Bai, Nana Sahib, Nahir Singh, Hazrat Mahal, Nawab Ali Bahadur, Nawab Taffazul Husain, Khan Bahadur Khan, Nawab Muhammad Khan etc. gave life to the movement. Muslim ulama like Maulana Ahmad Shah, Haji Imdad Ullah, Maulana

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1. Sir George Dunbar, India and the Passing Empire, London, 1951.

Mohammad Qasim, Nanautvi, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangoli, Maulana Faiz Ahmad Badayuni, Maulana Liaqat Ali, Maulana Fazal Haque, Khairabadi and Maulana Abdul Qadir, Ludhianwi participated in it. They had no personal grudge against the British but were the symbol of patriotism and enemy of foreign rule in India. They were so popular among the masses, that once Maulvi Ahmad Shah was addressing a gathering of ten thousand people. The magistrate ordered the police man to arrest him but he refused to do so.<sup>1</sup>

The Wahhabis were constantly busy for the political and economic emancipation of the country. The Wahhabi slogan of 'Jihda' from the time of Shah Abdul Aziz had prepared the soil for the out break of the movement of 1857. The people left responsible posts and joined hands with the Wahhabis. After the death of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in 1831, they strengthened their contact with the important Muslim centres such as Deccan, like Hyderabad, Mysore and also with some of the states of central India and Rajputana.<sup>2</sup>

By 1857 every part of India had organized enthusiastic camps of the Wahhabis and these camps were waiting for a chance to rise against the British Raj. Hunter's analysis, despite the rebuttal of Sir Sayyid Ahmad, remains absolutely correct

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1. Musalmans-ke-Roshan Mustakbil, p. 8.

2. Such as Bhopal, Tonk, Jaipur etc.

that the Wahhabis had created and nourished the anti-British feeling which expressed itself in the upheaval of 1857. It was the faith created by them which led to the temporary capture of Delhi and the emergence of Bahadur Shah, who was eighty two at this time as the leader of the struggle. Lacke of discipline and equipment and ignorance of the new methods of warfare, and above all the absence of a dynamic leadership led to the failure of the Indians. Bahadur Shah was arrested and exiled. To quote spear he was, "a halo of martyrdom and an aura of romantic sympathy collected round the aged figure who would otherwise have been regarded as an unfortunate play thing of destiny."<sup>1</sup> His two sons were shot dead by the commander Hodson. He was sent to Rangoon, far away from his beloved city. Both Hindus and Muslims were indiscriminately killed. 'In the city (Delhi) no man's life was safe, all able-bodied men who were seen were taken for rebels and shot."<sup>2</sup>

The 'Mutiny' was crushed by an iron hand by the British. The main sufferers were the Muslims who, on no account were prepared to loose political power. "The truth is "remarks Hunter," that when the country passed under our rule, the Musalmans were the superior race, and superior not only in stoutness of heart and strength of arm, but in power of political organization and in the science of practical government.

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1. Percival Spear — Twilight of the Mughals, p. 226.
  2. Two Native Narrations, p.71, Narrative of Mainodin.

Yet the Muhammadans are now shut out equally from Government employ and from the higher occupations of non-official life."<sup>1</sup> So also in the view of Harrington Thomas that educationally, intellectually and morally Muslims were far superior to Hindus and possessed far more ability manage affairs of the State and anybody else.<sup>2</sup> But the British were determined to crush the Muslims.

Jawaharlal Nehru has correctly observed :

"After 1857 the heavy hand of the British fell more on the Muslims than on the Hindus. They considered the Muslims more aggressive and militant, possessing memories of recent rule in India, and therefore more dangerous."<sup>3</sup>

The Faraizi movement and the Wahhabi movement which were launched to restore peace and to regain political power ended in the catastrophe of 1857. In fact it was in 1857 and not 1831, that the Wahhabi and other movements came to an end. All hopes in future were now lost. Many Muslim leaders, like Haji Imdad Ullah who had actively participated in the struggle of 1857, migrated to Mecca.<sup>4</sup> Some of the remaining leaders like

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1. W.W.Hunter — Indian Musalmans, p. 171.

2. Indian Mutiny and our Future Policy, pp. 13-17.

3. Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography, p. 460.

4. Smith.

Mufti Karim of Delhi and Munshi Inayat Ahmad of Lucknow were sent after the Ambala and Patna trials of 1865 and 1869 to Andamans. The only place of some lively activities was the Wahhabi centre at Sittana, which was, "the centre towards which the hopes alike of our disloyal subjects and our enemies beyond the frontier turn."<sup>1</sup>

The Muslims continued to be the victims for many years after the Mutiny. The only tangible change in the policy occurred in 1870 when in the opinion of the British statesmen, the Muslim political movements had practically come to an end. The people who kept themselves aloof from the independence struggle and had acquired the knowledge of English and directed their energy to reorganize the Muslim society on a new basis without participating in political movements. It was due to this attitude that Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-1893) of Calcutta laid down the foundation of the Muhammadan Literary and Scientific Society in 1863. He said that the condition of the Muslims demanded concentration on social and educational programmes. He also received fatwas from different authorities in which it was categorically stated that India was not Dar-ul-Harb. The British government also changed its policy towards the Muslims, when the Hindus began to criticize the Government and several movements among them began to take shape. These movements aroused suspicion in the minds of the British. Muslims were now

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1. W.W.Hunter — The Indian Mussalmans.

given due importance and were helped so that they could improve their economic and educational standards.

During this most crucial period in the history of the Muslims of India, Sayyid Jamal-uddin Afghani<sup>1</sup>, paid a visit to India in 1879 and resented the political compromise between the Muslims and the British. But he was rather harsh and mistaken in his assessment. The Muslims were never in favour of English rule and, at least from the time of Shah Abdul Aziz, there were feelings against the British. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and Ismail Shahid wanted to launch a powerful movement against the English. In 1857 the Muslims were the chief culprits in the eyes of the British. Even Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not left unaffected and he said, "At this time I could not imagine that this community (Muslim) will regain its prestige and honour and I could not see its actual condition with my own eyes. Several days this thought haunted in my mind. Believe me that due to this I became old and my hair turned white."<sup>2</sup>

1857 left Muslim politics in the wilderness and it took several decades before Muslims recovered from the shock they had received.

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1. "The greatest Egyptian reformer of the nineteenth century was Jamal Uddin Afghani, a religious leader who sought to modernize Islam by reconciling it with modern conditions. He preached that all progress could be reconciled with Islam." Jawaharlal Nehru — Glimpses of World History, p. 609.

2. The collection of Letters 4.

## A P P E N D I X "A"

### SOME LETTERS OF SAYYID AHMAD

۱- بنام سلطان هوت

اقامت جهاد را از ناله یمن و فساد در هر زمان و هر مکان از احم احکم حضرت رب المباد است خصوصاً درین جزو زمان که وقت شورش اهل کفر و طغیان بحدی رسیده که تخریب شمائردین و انهد حکومت ملاطین از دست کفره منورین و بغاوت بوقوع آمده و این فتنه عظیم تمام بلاد هند و سند و خراسان را گرفته - پس درین صورت تغافل در مقدمه استیصال کفره منورین و تساهل در باب سوزش باغیان مفسدین از اکبر حاصل و اقیح آتام است - بناد علیه این بنده درگاه حضرت اله از وطن مالوفه خود برخاسته در دیار هند و سند و خراسان دور و سیر نموده و مومنین آن اقطار و مسلمین آن دیار را باین معنی ترغیب کرد -  
(مکاتیب شاه اسماعیل شهید قلمی نسخه ص ۳۴ - ۳۸)

### To the King of Hirat Shah Muhammad

"To proclaim holy war and to avoid rebellion and riots every where and in every age, has always been the important command of God. Specially in such circumstances when the activities of infidels have reached to such an extent that the Islamic principles are being distorted and the disturbances are being created in the Islamic Kingdoms. This evil spector has cast its shadows on India, Sindh and Khurasan. In this critical situation the avoidance of any effective measure to put an end to these evils, is



the greatest sin. In order to checkmate this situation, the humble servant of God (Sayyid Ahmad Shahid) came out of his native land and went on an extensive tour of Hind, Sindh and Khurasan and imbibed in these Muslims the spirit for jihad."<sup>1</sup>

۲- بنام هندو راجا

بیگانگان بعید الوطن ملوک زمین و زمین گرویده اند و تاجران متاع فروش بهایه سلطنت رسیده امارت امرای کبار و ریاست روسای عالی مقدار برپا کرده اند و عزت و اعتبارشان بالکل رفته - چون اهل ریاست و سیاست در زانو خجسته اند لا چاری چندی از اهل فقر و مسکنت مکرمیت بسته این جماعه ضعیفه حتی بنا بر خدمت دین رب العالمین برخاسته اند هرگز هرگز از دنیا داران جاه طلب نیستند ..... وقتی که میدان هندوستان از بیگانگان و دشمنان خالی گردیده و تیر سخی ایشان هر هدف مراد رسیده آئنده مناصب ریاست و سیاست به طالبین آن مسلم باد -

(مکاتیب شاه اسماعیل شهید قلمی نسخه ص ۱۷۰)

Letter to Hindu Rao of Gwalior.

"The strangers from across the Oceans became the rulers of India; the mere mercantilists laid the foundations of an empire; the mesonic lodgings of the wealthy and the estates of the rich no longer existed, and their honour and repose was snatched

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1. Makatib-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, (MS.) Letter No. 37.

away. Masters of domain and realm retired into the limbo of oblivion. At last it were only a few among the saints and the hermits who girdled their loins of courage. This group of fidels have raised their heads only for the service of God's own faith. They desire neither world nor power. When India will be freed from aliens and enemies and the ambitions of the faithful have been fulfilled, the high ranks of the state and politics will be assigned to those who covet them."<sup>1</sup>

۳- بنام غلام حیدر خان

اکثر بلاد هندوستان بدست بیگانگان افتاده و ایشان هر جا بنیاد و آئین جور و ظلم نهاده - ریاست روسای هندوستان برپا داشته - کسی تاب مقاومت ایشان نمی دارد - بلکه هرکس ایشان را آقای خود می شمارد و چون روسای کبار از مقابلہ ایشان نشستند لاچار چند کس از ضعفای بی مقدار کمر بستند -

To Ghulam Haider Khan.

"A large part of Indian territory have gone under the sway of the aliens and they have girdled their loins on injustice and high handedness. The reign of Indian rulers have come to an end. No one dares to challenge them, everyone has acquiesced to regard them their master. Since great and eminent rulers

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1. Maktubat-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, (MS.) Letter No. 170.

have abandoned to challenge them, some humble and insignificant people have pledged to face their challenge."<sup>1</sup>

۲- بنام شاه سلیمان

قضا را از مدت چند سال حکومت و سلطنت این ملک برین عنوان گردیده که نصراى  
نکوهیده خصال و مشرکین بد مال بر اکثر بلاد هند استیلا یافتند و آن دیار را بظلمات  
ظلم و بیداد مشحون ساختند و در آن بلاد و اعمار رسوم کفر و شرک اشتهار یافته -  
شعائر اسلام را روزه استنار آورده - ناگزیر سینه بی کینه بمحائنه این حال بر ازرنج  
و ملال بود - بشوق هجرت مالا مال - غیرت ایمانی بدل در جوش بود و اقامت جهاد پسر  
خرویش -

To Shah Sulaiman.

"Unfortunately such a State of affairs is obtaining in India in the past few years that the Christians and infidels have come to dominate the major portion of the country and have started committing atrocities. The customs of profanity and polytheism have taken an upper hand while the manners of the Faith are thrown into oblivion. Such a State of affairs has brought great sorrow to us - desire of migration started lurking, the heart is blushing with shame and there is a passion for jihad or religious crusade."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Maktubat.

2. Maktubat-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, (MS.).

## ۵- بنام سردار بده سنگ

از امیر المومنین سید احمد بر ضمیر ایهیت تخمیر سه سالار جنو و عساکر مالک خزان  
ودفاتر جامع ریاست و سیاست حاوی امارت و ایالت صاحب شمشیر و جنگ عدالت نشان  
سردار بده سنگ هده الله سوا الطریق و ابطر علیه سبحانه التوفیق پوشیده نداند که  
نامه فصاحت شما مشتمل بر اظهار مراتب و دعاوی شجاعت و شهامت رسید مضامین  
مندرجه واضح گردید - ظاهراً آنچه این جانب را ازین هنگامه آرائی و سرکه پیروانی  
مقصود است آن را خوب نفهمیده اند که نامه مذکور نگارش نموده اند - الحال بگوش  
باید شنید و خلاصه آن بغور تمام باید فهمید که منازعت باهل حکومت و ریاست بنابر  
افتراض متعدد می باشد - بعضی را از منازعت مذکوره حصول مال و ریاست مقصود می  
باشد و بعضی را اظهار شجاعت و شهامت و بعضی را فقط تحصیل مرتبه و شهادت  
و این جانب را امر دیگر مقصود است و آن فقط بجا آوردن حکم مولای خود که  
مالک علی الاطلاق و ملک بالا مستحقاق است که در مقدمه نصرت دین محمدی  
وارد شده است خدای عز و جل گواه است براین معنی که این جانب را  
ازین هنگامه آرائی غیر از امر مذکور غرض دیگر از افتراض نفسانیه در میان نیست  
بلکه آرزوی حصول آن هم نه گاهی بر زبان جاری میگردد نه گاهی در دل میگذرد  
و پس در نصرت دین محمدی هر سعی بهر وجه که ممکن می باشد بجا می آیم و هر  
تدبیری که در آن مفید می نماید بر روی کار می آیم و انشاء الله تادم مرگ همین  
سعی مشغول خواهم ماند و تمام عمر در همین تدبیرات مهذول خواهم گزید - تا  
زنده ام همین راه می پیم و تا موجودم همین مقصد می جویم - تا سروپاست همین راه است  
و همین سودا خواهم بفلس شوم خواهم غنی خواهم بمنصب سلطنت یابم خواهم منصب رفیت  
گری خواهم متهم بجهن شوم خواهم متمم بشجاعت خواهم بهرته غزافاثر شوم خواهم بمنزل شهادت آری  
اگر بینم رضای مولای من در همین منحصر است که در سرکه جنگ تنها بجان خود بیام پس بالله و تالله  
که بعد جان سینه سپر نمایم در مجامع عسکرین دعدغه و وسواس در آیم - بالجمله مرا باظهار دعاوی  
شجاعت و تحصیل ریاست غرض نیست - علامتش همین است که اگر کسی از امرای کبار و روسای عالمقدار  
دین محمدی قبول نماید فی الحال مرد انگلی او بعد زبان اظهار نمایم و از دیاد سلطنت او بهزار جان

میخواهم بلکه در باب ترقی ریاست او مساعی بی شمار من آم - این امر واقعی الحال  
امتحان کنند اگر خلاف برآید الزام دهند - اگر بنظر انصاف غور نمایند این جانب  
درین مقدمه اصلاً مطمئن و ملام نیست زیرا که وقتیکه آن عظمت نشان در مقدمه  
بجا آوردن احکام حاکم خود هیچ عذری و حمله نمی توانند در آن حالیکه آن حکومت  
نشان از افراد انسان بلکه از جمله برادران ایشان است - پس این جانب در مقدمه  
بجا آوردن حکم احکم الحاکمین چه گونه عذر تواند در آن حالیکه آن جلیل نشان  
خالق جمیع افراد انسان بل مکنون سائر اکوان است و ایسلام علی من اتبع الهدی -  
(مجموعه خطوط قللی)

From:-

The Commander of the faithful, Sayyid Ahmad Sahib,  
in reply to the letter of Sardar Budh Singh, the chief of the  
armies of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

In the name of God, the merciful and clement. From  
the side of the Lord of the faithfuls, it should not remain  
concealed to the heart, leavened with magnificence of the  
general of the troops and armies, the owner of the treasures  
and offices, comprisor of the dominion and the politics,  
comprehender of the grandeur and the government, skilled in  
the arts of sword and warfare, with a banner of magnitude,  
Sardar Budh Singh, may God lead him to the right path and cause  
to rain upon him the cloud of Divine guidance, that their  
letter full of eloquence, comprising the statement of fortitude  
and ingenuity reached here. The statements mentioned in it  
became evident. It seems that they did not understand fully  
what we intend. by these tumult and turmoils, that is why

they have written the said letter.

Now they should listen to it carefully and should understand the sense of it with perfect attention that the litigation with the government and the state is based on different reasons. Some of the people intend to acquire riches and power through it, others wish to make a show of their bravery while some desire only to acquire the rank of martyrdom, but we need some thing different, and that is only to obey the commands of my Lord, the real master and the most worthy king, which is arrived in the matter of the help of Prophet Muhammad's religion.

God the magnificent and most exalted is the witness to the fact that no motive from among the sensual motives except the said objective, is desired by us in these warfares, rather wven the desire of that does neither come to the lips nor does arise in the heart.

So in the defence of the religion of Prophet Muhammad I perform my every act in such a way which is useful for the same and if God the most exalted wished I will continue to remain busy in this very effort till the time of my death and will spend the whole of my life in these very prudences. So long I am alive will continue to follow this path and will try to reach my desired destination. So long there are hands and feet, there is very path to travel and the same ambition to

gain. Either I become an insolent or a rich one, people accuse me of cowardice or name with ingenuity, I attain a noble status or the rank of a martyr but (whatever the result may be) if I think that the acquiescence of my Lord depends upon this very fact that I should come, in the arena, alone with my own life, I will certainly do so and for God's sake I will stand with my whole heart, in the foremost rank without flinching. I will enter into the congregations of the armies without any doubt and fear.

In these words, I do not desire to make a show of my fortitude or to acquire riches and the evidence of this fact is that if any one of the great lords and the high ranking chief accepts the religion of Prophet Muhammad, I will praise his manliness with all my heart and soul and will have good wishes for his state and dominion. Not only this but I will also do numerous efforts for the rapid development and progress of his state. If I do contrary to it, I will be blamed for that.

If they think over it realistically, they will come to know that in this matter I am not to be accused or blamed at all, because when that magnificent chief (Budh Singh) cannot offer any excuse or apology in obeying the orders of his rulers, though he (the ruler) is one of their persons rather one of their brothers, how is it possible to offer an excuse in obeying the commands of the strongest while that Exalted one is not only the creator of all human being but the Creator of the entire Universe.

"May peace be on those who follow the right path."<sup>1</sup>

"میں نے ہندوستان میں خیال کیا کہ کوئی جگہ ایسی مامون ہو کہ وہاں مسلمانوں کو لے کر جاؤں اور جہاد کی تدبیر کروں۔ باوجود اس وسعت کے کہ صدا کروہ (کوس) میں ملک ہند واقع ہوا ہے کوئی جگہ ہجرت کے لائق خیال میں نہ آئی۔ کتنے لوگوں نے صلاح دی کہ اسی ملک میں جہاد کرو۔ جو کچھ مال خزانہ سلاح وغیرہ درکار ہو ہم دین گے مگر مجھ کو منظور نہ ہوا اس لئے کہ جہاد سنت کے موافق چاہئے۔ بلوہ کرنا منظور نہیں۔ تمہارے ملک کے ولایتی بھائی بھی حاضر تھے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ تمہارا ملک اس کے واسطے بہت خوب ہے۔ اگر وہاں چل کر کسی ملک میں قیام اختیار کریں تو وہاں کے لاکھوں مسلمان جان و مال سے آپ کے شریک ہوں گے خصوصاً اس سبب سے کہ رنجیت سنگھ والی لاہور نے وہاں کے مسلمانوں کو نہایت تنگ کر رکھا ہے۔ طرح طرح کی ایذا پہنچاتا ہے اور مسلمانوں کی بے آبروش کرتا ہے۔ جب اس کی فوج کے لوگ اس ملک میں آتے ہیں مسجدوں کو جلا دیتے ہیں کھیتیاں تباہ کرتے ہیں مال و اسباب لوٹ لیتے ہیں بلکہ عورتوں اور بچوں کو پکڑ لے جاتے ہیں اور اپنے ملک پنجاب میں لے جا کر بیچ ڈالتے ہیں۔ پنجاب میں وہ مسلمانوں کو اذان بھی نہیں کہنے دیتے۔ مسجدوں میں گھوڑے باندھتے ہیں۔ گاؤ کشی کا تو کیا // ذکر جہان سنتے ہیں کہ کسی مسلمان نے گلے ذبح کی۔ اس کو جان سے مار ڈالتے ہیں۔ یہ سن کر میرے خیال میں آیا کہ یہ سچ کہتے ہیں اور یہی مناسب ہے کہ ہندوستان سے ہجرت کر کے وہیں چل کر ٹھہریں اور سب مسلمانوں کو متفق کر کے کفار سے



جہاد کریں اور ان کے ظلم سے مسلمانوں کو چھڑائیں ۔

Speech delivered by Syed Ahmad

"I tried to find out a place in India where I can possibly take all the Muslims and start religious crusade. In spite of the vastness of the country I could not find a suitable place for migration. Many people advised us to begin jihad in the country and also promised to give us help both in men and material. But I did not agree to it, because jihad is to be declared in conformity with the Islamic principles and it does not mean only sporadic rioting. VILLAYATI, brothers of your country were also present there and they said that their (part of the) country is best suited for the purpose and if we stay there lakhs of Muslims will participate in the struggle with their heart and soul, specially because Ranjit Singh has put the Muslims under the great pressure and hardship and is teasing them in different manners and dishonours them. With the advent of his army in the landscape mosques are destroyed, agriculture laid waste, property looted; women and children driven away and sold in Punjab. The Muslims are prevented even from saying AZAN and the mosques are used as stables for horses. What is of cow slaughter even a hear say results in the killing of man. Due to all these miseries and oppression I thought proper to migrate from India to this very place. We intend with all Muslim unity

and strength to declare jihad against the infidel to relieve the Muslims from their cruel clutchers,"<sup>1</sup>

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1. Speech delivered before a huge crowd in which many Ulemas and other people were Present at Punjtar - on the frontier of Surat, Distt. Mardan, a Pathan locality also a centre of Sayyid Ahmad's military actions.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi - Sirat-i-Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Khwaja Book Depot Urdu Bazar, Lahore, p. 379.

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